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HOUND & HORN

OCTOBER–DECEMBER, 1931

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TRANSLATION, an essay by A. Hyatt Mayor

ASP OF THE AGE, a poem by Merle Hoyleman

DEATH OF A GIRL, a story by Samuel Yellen

BERLIN ARCHITECTURAL SHOW 1931 H. R. Hitchcock

MICKEY MOUSE, a chronicle by Kenneth White

A RUSSIAN BIBLIOGRAPHY, a review by Leon Dennen

POEMS, by R. P. Blackmur and Horace Gregory

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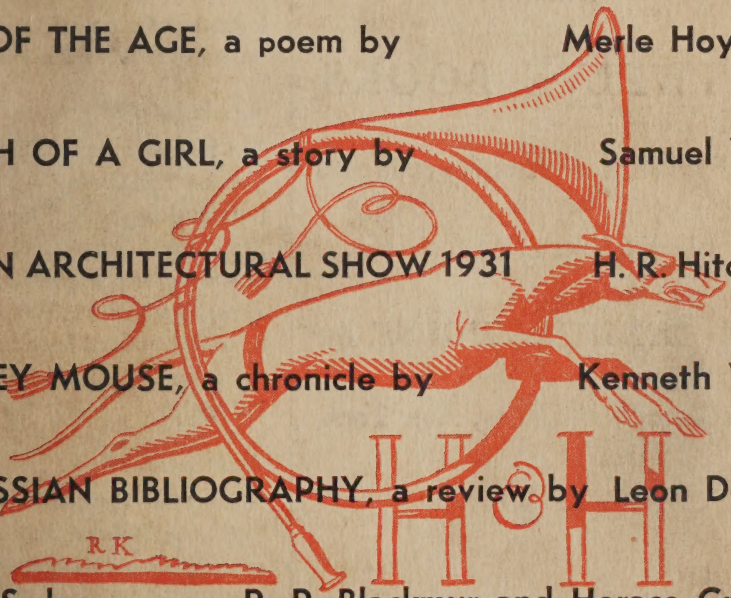

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Samuel Yellen teaches in the Indiana State University. A story of his called "A Socialist Childhood" appeared in the October, 1930, American Mercury.

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Horace Gregory has recently finished a translation of Catullus (Covici Friede). His own poems "Chelsea Rooming House" were reviewed in the last HOUND & HORN.

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TRANSLATION

For Ezra Pound: *il santo atleta,*
benigno ai suoi, ed ai nemici crudo

> "Methinks I come like a Malefactor, to make a speech upon the Gallows, and to warn all Poets, by my sad example, from the sacrilege of translating Virgil."
> Dryden's Preface to *Sylvae.*

MOST people, even people who admire the English Bible, consider translators as hack writers pressed for cash, and their translations as nothing but gawky substitutes for the originals. This is not always so.

Poe, for instance, speaks French more readily than English, as any comparison of his writing with Baudelaire's translation will show. Notice how the end of the following passage, the delayed summing up, rings out so much more triumphantly in French than it does in English, even though translated word for word:

Moreover, although it was stated by *L'Etoile* that the corpse was reinterred at the public expense, that an advantageous offer of private sepulture was absolutely declined by the family, and that no member of the family attended the ceremonial: — although, I say, all this was asserted by *L'Etoile* in furtherance of the impression it designed to convey — yet *all* this was satisfactorily disproved.

En outre, bien que L'Étoile affirme que le corps a été réenterré aux frais de l'État — qu'une offre avantageuse de sépulture particulière a été absolument repoussée par la famille — et qu'aucun membre de la famille n'assistait à la cérémonie — bien que l'Étoile, dis-je, affirme tout cela pour corroborer l'impression qu'elle cherche à produire, — *tout cela* a été victorieusement réfuté.

Even in Poe's best writing, in his descriptions, Baudelaire often made something more dense, more inevitable. Notice the sound of *drap mortuaire* in the following:

Some few ottomans and golden candelabra, of Eastern figure, were in various stations about; and there was the couch, too — the bridal couch — of an Indian model, and low, and sculptured of solid ebony, with a pall-like canopy above.

Quelques rares ottomanes et des candélabres d'une forme orientale occupaient différents endroits, et le lit aussi, — le lit nuptiale, — était dans le style indien, — bas, sculpté in bois d'ébène massif, et surmonté d'un baldaquin qui avait l'air d'un drap mortuaire.

Poe's case may be a special one, since he seems so often, while writing English, to be thinking in French. At any rate, Baudelaire's translation often has an air of restoring Poe to his mother tongue, just as *Gil Blas* was "restored" by being translated into Spanish.

But apart from intrinsic merit, translations often help even the greatest artists to their creations. It is a classroom commonplace to compare passages in Shakespeare with North's *Plutarch*, but little attention is paid to the additions that Shakespeare made to North. It may be interesting to give a genealogy of one of Shakespeare's most quoted pas-

sages. The words in *italics* are those that each writer has *added* to his predecessor. They show how Amyot made Plutarch more loquacious, and North more precise:[1]

AMYOT: Elle n'en daigna autrement s'advancer, sinon que de se mettre sur le fleuve Cydnus dedans un bateau, dont la pouppe estoit d'or, les voiles de pourpre, les rames d'argent, que l'on manioit au son et à la cadence d'une musique de flustes, haulbois, cythres, *violes et autres telz instrumens dont on jouoit dedans*. Et au reste, *quant à sa personne*, elle estoit couchée dessoubs un pavillon d'or tissu, vestue *et accoustrée toute en la sorte* que lon peinct *ordinairement* Venus, et auprès d'elle d'un costé et d'autre de *beaux petits* enfans *habillez ne plus ne moins que les peintres ont accoustumé* de portraire les Amours, avec des esvantaux *en leurs mains*, dont ils l'esventoyent.

NORTH: She mocked Antonius so much, that she disdained to set forward otherwise, but to take her Barge in the River of Cydnus; the Poope whereof was of Gold, the Sailes of Purple, the Owers of Siluer, which kept stroke *in rowing* after the sounde of Musicke of Flutes, Howboys, Citherns, Viols, and such other instruments as they played upon *in the Barge*. And now for the person of her selfe: she was layed under a Pauilion of Cloth of Gold of Tissue, apparelled and attired like the goddesse Venus, commonly drawen in *Picture:* and hard by her, on either hand of her, pretie *faire* Boyes apparelled as Painters doe set forth *god Cupid*, with *litle* Fannes in their hands, with the which they fanned *wind upon her.*

SHAKESPEARE:

The Barge *she sat in, like a burnisht Throne*
Burnt on the water; The Poope was *beaten* Gold,
Purple the Sailes: *and so perfumed that*
The Windes were Loue-sicke
With them. The Owers were Siluer,
Which to the tune of Flutes kept stroke, *and made*
The water which they beate, to follow faster;
As amorous of their strokes. For her owne person,
It beggerd all discription, she did lye
In her Pauilion, cloth of Gold, of Tissue,

[1] For an extended comparison of Amyot and North, see F. O. Matthiessen's excellent study: *Translation, an Elizabethan Art*, Harvard University Press, 1931.

O're-picturing that Venus, *where we see*
The fancie out-worke Nature. On each side her,
Stood pretty *Dimpled* Boyes, like *smiling* Cupids,
With *diuers coulour'd* Fannes whose winde *did seeme,*
To gloue the delicate cheekes which they did coole,
And what they vndid did.

If you read nothing but Shakespeare's additions (printed in italics) Shakespeare looks like an own cousin to John Donne. It is as though he took the dense matter of antiquity and charged it with the effervescence of the metaphysical spirit, that spirit whose workings he had dramatized long before in *Richard II*. Plutarch was his diving board, whence he sprang off, again and again, into the blue of his own heaven. He seems most at his ease while paraphrasing, as though the structure of antique rhetoric stimulated him to his freest elaborations. His originality, or perhaps all originality, is not a matter of theme but of treatment. Shakespeare works like a musician making variations on another man's air.[2]

* * * * *

Foreign authors (especially authors in dead languages) need translators in the same way that composers need musicians — to quicken their hieroglyphics into sound and sense. The interpreter of a foreign author or piece of music should obliterate himself in an attempt to reproduce the exact effect the author or composer intended. I say *should*, though few do, since it takes more reverence and historical taste than most musicians possess, more reverence and skill in English than most translators. As Dryden said: "In such Translatours I can easily distinguish the hand which performed the Work, but I cannot distinguish their Poet from another." Among English translations, our Bible has the supreme authority of reverence, knowledge of the object and

[2] North's *Plutarch* is a mine of stage business for any regisseur about to produce any of the Roman tragedies. The action of the scenes around the Monument in *Antony* is especially made clearer.

mastery of the means. Among contemporary musicians, probably Wanda Landowska.

The translator's humility before his object is not to be despised, for it may provide a poet with one of the few remaining escapes from the private world, as it does for Ezra Pound in his *Cavalcanti*. It *may* provide such an escape, but does not necessarily do so, as Pound shows in his *Propertius*, which is a teacher's joke, a wink he shares with the head of the class, if any. His *Propertius* is not so much a translation as a commentary whose wit can be savored only after comparison with the original. I know only one other translator who demands that you know his original as thoroughly as he: — Launcelot Andrewes when he gives, for instance: "Whom of His just wrath against sin He brought hither, now having fulfilled all righteousness he was to bring hence again" as the English for: "Quem deduxit iratus, reduxit placatus."

Translations of contemporaries, like Urquhart's *Rabelais*, Baudelaire's *Poe*, or even such a sloppy job as Florio's *Montaigne*, have something of the authority of a single mind, since both the author and the translator have read more or less the same books, take more or less the same things of their time for granted, use languages in more or less the same stage of development, and can count on addressing audiences that share these similarities. The translator of a contemporary has not only his own mind to catch his author with, but the mind of his time as well. As such a contemporary translation ages, its language acquires the authority of "dating" back to the same period as the original. An author talks out of a contemporary translation like a single head out of double tongues.

The authority of a contemporary translation is unique and irrecoverable because a work of art reveals itself "in the round" to its own time only. Later times see it by parts, and because they see it by parts, they see successive parts more sharply.

(For it is not altogether true that the greatest works of art preserve their essence for posterity only. We see far deeper than Shakespeare's contemporaries into Shakespeare's use of simile, source material, character drawing, or poetry, but we do not know him "in the round", as his audience did. Seeing him in our theatres helps, but not much since no actor to-day can think fast enough to keep pace with the evolutions of his arabesque, nor can we as audience. His own audience grasped his poetry, characters, and situations as part and parcel of their own freshly developing lives, and they saw his great machinery working in the outdoor theatre and on themselves, the outdoor audience for which it was devised. Shakespeare was something much more complete than anything we can imagine when Antony for the first time said: "Unarm, Eros, the long day's task is done" into the full glare of sundown, and Charmian, in the early night, was first found trimming up Cleopatra's diadem. We miss, for one very simple thing, the eternal rhythm imposed by the westering sun, and the play of day's end on the end of his tragedies; Hamlet being carried back into the deeper dusk within the traverse, to the far thunder of ordinance; Coriolanus shouting: "Men and lads, stain all your edges on me" in a gathering blackness slashed by torches. Electric lights and scenery are an impertinence to Shakespeare, whose words can do a trick worth twice all that — when, that is, you have live actors and a live audience. The trouble is that works of art are made for use and kept, when kept at all, for decoration. When Shakespeare is translated nowadays, he is translated as character drawing, or poetry, but never as outdoor stage machinery.)

Strictly speaking, an ancient work of art is impossible to translate because we no longer have the identical use for it, nor the identical mind to grasp it with. (But then strictly speaking, no mind can do exactly the same thing as another — not even contemporaries can play each other's music.

Duke Ellington cannot play Louis Armstrong's trumpet, nor can Armstrong think in Ellington's harmonic progressions.) Translations are possible only if you allow as much approximation as there is in a musician playing some other man's music.

Because few men see much beyond what the mind of their time accustoms them to see, old translations of Greek and Latin authors gradually part company with their originals and appear as independent works of their later times. This can be illustrated by some lines (Iliad I, 345) from the three outstanding English translations of Homer; from Chapman, who caught Homer's adventurous energy, from Pope, who saw his swift ease (perhaps the chief thing, after all) and from Lang, who looked back on his early simplicities: —

CHAPMAN:

This speech vsd, Patroclus did the rite
His friend commanded; and brought forth Briseis from her tent;
Gaue her the heralds, and away, to th' Achiue ships they went:
She sad, and scarce for griefe, could go; her loue, all friends forsooke,
And wept for anger.

POPE:

Patroclus now th'unwilling Beauty brought;
She in soft sorrows, and in pensive thought,
Past silent, as the heralds held her hand,
And oft look'd back, slow moving o'er the strand.

LANG: So spake he, and Patroklos hearkened to his dear comrade, and led forth from the hut Briseis of the fair cheeks, and gave them her to lead away. So these twain took their way back along the Achaians' ships, and with them went the woman all unwilling.[3]

[3] Lang's artificial New Testament lisp, his learnedly affected awkwardness, was probably suggested to him by a remark in Arnold's admirable essay *On Translating Homer:* "The Bible is undoubtedly the grand mine of diction for the translator of Homer." But Lang's "simplicities" neither recapture Homer's clean speed, nor the Bible's grave brevity. Arnold showed how much more wisely he meant his remark in his fragment of translation from the Iliad, probably the truest Iliad in English.

Pope cannot be read as Homer (hence the witlessness of the Nonesuch Press in using him for their bi-lingual Homer) but it is one of the finest eighteenth century poems in the classical taste. Lang and his collaborators already look almost as exclusively Victorian as Chapman is Elizabethan. Our time is ready for a fresh translation of Homer, a simple one, without archaisms (and ours will probably part company with the original for lack of dignity). To translate a concrete writer like Homer, you have to melt him down until nothing remains but his object, and then build up from that object again in the nearest English equivalent to his style. This is not easy, but still possible, whereas a writer like Horace looks to me impossible to translate, since Latin syntax is so much his inspiration and his fabric that almost nothing can be wrenched loose for use in a less inflected language. The same is true of Virgil.

A French author (Baudelaire, for instance) can often be rendered word for word and keep his meaning and tone. This you can rarely do with German, where the inflection and construction are about as complicated as simple New Testament Greek. Classic Greek is a step still further away from the genius of English. In fact the complex brevities of Greek and Latin, their habit of making words ring by placing them rather than by selecting them, makes ancient authors very hard to coax into a language as simply inflected as English is. Sophocles, for instance, constructs his sentences like algebraic equations, wrenched apart by emphatic brackets. Yet even English words are made to ring by their place alone in the Elizabethan dramatists and preachers, who wrote to be spoken. For rendering Latin, English must become almost impossibly concise, and for Greek almost impossibly swift and limpid. Also: each Greek word rings simple and clean, while an English word remembers a millennium of Babel. The translator of Greek and Latin can hardly avoid assuming the embarrassing freedom of paraphrase.

Ancient works of art shine on after ages like stars, now brighter, now dimmer. You cannot expect to improve upon a translation made during an author's almost full visibility. For instance, eighteenth century England, with its collaboration of politics and literature, its Grecian elegance, its travelled urbanity, is sufficiently close to Augustan Rome to be able to catch the genuine flavor of many Latin and some Greek writers. The study of Cicero and Tacitus had formed an English that was admirably adapted to translating these authors. Melmoth's *Letters of Cicero*, Murphy's *Tacitus* (reprinted in the *Everyman*) and Carr's *Lucian* (Lucian, who was himself almost an eighteenth century journalist) catch more of the distinguished ease of their originals than any translations could nowadays. (It is a pity that the *Cicero* and the *Lucian* have been allowed to go out of print since the early nineteenth century.) Again, the early Renaissance was enough like late antiquity in its greed for exemplary tittle-tattle about Greek and Roman worthies to enable Amyot to bring Plutarch into French all alive. It is because Elizabethan England got into the habit of gloating over Italian murders that Philemon Holland was able to catch the full richness of Suetonius's Roman garbage. (This is another translation that deserves to be more accessible than it is in the Tudor Translations reprint of 1899.)

Before you set about translating an ancient author you must determine what kind of an audience he was addressing and how he wished to move them. Then you must look about and see if you have a similar audience that can be moved by these same things. If you have not, your translation, addressed to the void, will be an empty exercise. Did the author, for instance, set out to touch the single heart, like the New Testament, or to address the whole tribe, like the Old? The translators of the Bible worked for a congregation that needed prayers and collects for its private devotions and sermons for its public exhortations. It was this congrega-

tion, and not King James, that called our English Bible to life. The translator of a contemporary does not have to worry about an audience.

* * * * *

The quotations from Plutarch and Shakespeare have shown, if it needed showing, how important a rôle translations played in Elizabethan literature. If English is ever to have another literature (can it?) good translations would help make it possible, especially good translations from the antique, the grand mine of form. It might be useful to attempt a catalogue of the antique translations that are good enough to keep, and of those we still need to have done.

We are well supplied with the historians, since most of our translations have been made in universities. Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Livy, Tacitus and Suetonius all exist in admirably readable and accurate versions. We have more Latin authors than Greek since both the Catholic Church and the Renaissance grew up on Latin ground. Indeed, the Greeks were pretty much of a mystery even to the Romans (Tacitus, for instance, understands Tiberius like a brother, but seems a bit stumped by Nero's more Greek profligacy). The Renaissance (so much more Senecan than Sophoclean) was naturally still farther from the Greeks. Even Shakespeare's historical intuition (perhaps the sharpest there has ever been) did not get to the Greeks; *Troilus*, for instance, is simply another Roman sneer at the rickety last Greeklings. I imagine that the real Greeks have become partly visible only in the last century, only since Fustel de Coulanges taught us not to read our modern minds into the past, since the Aegina marbles were brought to Munich in 1812, since the Acropolis maidens were unearthed and the Olympia pediments re-assembled in the 1880's. These statues help one to read even Aristotle. They will not let you mistake the "Greek balance" for an equi-

librium of repose, but show it as an instant's ticklish capture, a pole vaulter poised for a camera flash in air. I might almost say that the Greek dramatists were impossible to translate before the Olympia pediments were known.

Outside the historians, I can think of no good translations of Greek prose except North's *Plutarch*, Carr's *Lucian*, and Church's readable and simple version of parts of Plato. (Jowett's Oxonian lecturing throws cold water all over Plato.) I can think of no good translations of Greek poetry, except perhaps H. D.'s crisp, but structureless, fragments; Arnold's fragment of the Iliad, and Pound's swift wonderful *First Canto*, of Odysseus among the dead.

And then there are the dramatists. It has been for some time the custom (a good custom) to boo on Sir Gilbert Murray for taking good clean simple Greek and charging it with garbage lugged from Swinburne. Contrary to most people, I think Jebb no better, with his petrified "poetic" jargon, his *sires*, his *guerdons*, his *doths* and his *doth n'ts*. Jebb is dull enough to be a trot, but not exact enough to be so useful. Yeats' translation of the *Oedipus* and *Antigone* is much better than these things, but even Yeats never winds up (as Sophocles always does) to a clinch. Worst fault of all, not one of the three has any sense of the stage, any sense of English fitted to an open mouth, or of what the actor's gesture can be left to express. For instance, when Oedipus becomes inarticulate with rage at Creon, he turns to the chorus of old Thebans for justification, crying out to them: ὦ πόλισ, πόλισ, *O city, city*, a cry his gesture makes amply clear. (A stage version could probably catch the sound as well as the sense with *Thebes, Thebes*.) But our translators dilute this vividness with explanations. Both Jebb and Yeats (in the one place I know where Yeats copies Jebb) give: "Hear him, O Thebes." Murray makes poor Oedipus fidget like the king of Lilliput: "To your King! Ho, Thebes, mine own."

As Dryden put it: "For a just Reward of their Pedantick pains, all their Translations want to be Translated, into *English.*"

Cocteau's shorthand versions of Sophocles would be admirable if they did not carry a certain schoolmasterly dryness into an affectation.

Poor people like me, who have to sweat at Greek, have no resource but trots. A trot differs from a translation in having no literary independence, and should always be printed side by side with the original, since it exists simply to give foreign words more handily than a dictionary and to help disentangle the syntax. A good trot should give the exact meaning and trade connotation (nautical, medical, philosophic, etc.) of each word. Though good trots are much easier to make than good translations, they are even scarcer. The best I know, in spite of expurgations and inaccuracies, are the old Classiques Juxtalinéaires that Hachette used to bring out from about 1840 until 1890, when the schoolmasters stopped them because they made Greek and Latin too charmingly easy. The best trot in English is undoubtedly the Temple Classics *Dante*, with its almost perfect selection of notes. Locke advocated (perhaps even originated) interlinear texts in *Some Thoughts concerning Education*—(an essay which, had it been listened to, might have made the British Public School System a little less conspicuously stupid). Early in the eighteenth century John Clarke carried out Locke's theories in a delightful series of bi-lingual Latin texts. Their modern successors, the Loeb Classics do well by their prose authors (except for their eager prudery) but render most of their poets in English verse, where literalness (a trot's only value) is impossible. A trot must be literal even where literalness makes nonsense in English. The paraphrase that makes sense should be given in a foot-note, as in the old Classiques Juxta.

It is shameful that we should have no acting translation

of any Greek dramatist, none plain and bold enough to declaim through a mask on an afternoon out of doors. Yeats has taken a good step in that direction, but even he falls below the style that Sophocles requires, geometric and terse. Yet I think that our barren English of today might be forged out into an instrument fit for Sophocles, who wilfully stripped his Greek almost as bare. He would certainly hold our attention as a constructor of melodrama, even though he might lose it by his legal quibblings. I doubt if any post-Elizabethan English could catch Aeschylus (more's the pity), but something better might be done with Euripides and Homer. I could wish for an Aristophanes with less bully beef about him than Hookham Frere's, though I doubt if our time permits that, either. We need a less luscious Petronius, something vindictive and distinguished. Our intellectuals ought to be enraged enough to take up the Roman satirists again and fling their vitriolic dirt, although I fear that our Christian habits of mind would hinder us from reaching out to their heroic sweep of bitterness and obscenity.

These tasks are not hackwork. They deserve the consideration of any modern poet.

A. Hyatt Mayor

ASP OF THE AGE

(whirl wheel)
"Nothing here, nothing here,"
I have called.
Swollen cords upon my throat
Stand rigid as a hardened rope.
"What is this to enter my door?"
The silent recluse, death
And life, in a gnarled root
Has risen from the scum,
Sprawled, and choked by food.
Taste it, eat it in the wood-drift
Where wild lilies bear pod-seed,
And reeds are a drill for flutes.
O, I have occasioned naught
Save the flick of worn sands
Upon the whirl wheel of night and day
With a screen before my face
I have closed my eyes, blind with speed,
(And there was space and no vision.)
Reach my hand against the smooth surface
Of hardened substance called glass.
Pierce the tissue beneath the lips
Against the sweet enamel of my mouth.
Strange clasping of the fixed and unfixed.
And the knives were heavier for the dew,
The rocks deeper than finger nails' print.
With the voice stilled in spasm
The slime of death upon the body
Has little cause to lend reply.

The burrs shrill at the heavy cudgel;
Lie rusted by the barrenness of the rain.
Torment.

These different from the globule of the eye?
Sees not the quiet runner nor hears the tum, tum,
Sweet with the charred resplendence of the past.
(Scratch the eaten inevitableness
Against an endless pulse)

(nine women)
And love, in a garment of oblivion's guards,
Swabbed by timelessness
Cerates hate with a pungent, heavy skin.
Boneless belligerence netted in human sound
Hurls itself against the fertile minds of spheres.
And, nine women of these regions ground
The tines of their forks upon the howling emery wheel.
Beautiful, bulging vigor bent close to the hungry whine.
White, lean points of metal
Stung hot by the shrill whistling wheel
Moved ominously into vacuity
Where volatile minds follow this element
Returning to a less troubled state.
It is they who have saved the ore rock
To sift in shallow-circled trays.
Wooden trays, soft in powdered stone and iron,
Are oozing, hissing with body moisture,
While nine women follow each in line
Stand in thin trays, grinding their forks away.
Eighteen horny feet, deadened to sensitivity,
Stamped vibrantly before they began to ossify.

(wood from worms)
And who but I would converse with the angle worm
Sliming in water strained through dung?
And gnats lay lame in the oiled saucer
When the snick of movement ceases within them?

There'll be a plough to open blue wounds,
A mouth to crawl after the furrows.

O bloodless bones are as the eyes of the dead.
The potter, I say, had a drouth in his mire,
The heaviness of stone, the flesh without fuel.
Was it he who left his asses in the drowsiness
Of hedges sprinkled with the weight of dust?
I shall clasp my hands together with raspiness,
Drunk with the bitterness of wood from worm,
Stretch myself apart from the filth of flesh,
Be without the carrion of the wilderness,
And spit the drying gravel from my tight lips.
My soul will fret at the rot of morsel
When the sand has no dew
Nor the winds the net of decay.
Will the lilies stand the mortar of my day
Or will the hiss of earth bury them in lava
Black with the ashes of death,
Or the broken sickle from above the grave
Cut down the wisdom of this molten rock?
O that is the way lilies flame dry
In the indestructible world I know.
And water bitten in the underground sting
Shall seep into the whiteness of lilies
That declare they will give no remnant to the tomb.
The milk of the lilies will stiffen rigidly
As the caking of the impervious foundation goes on.
O brutal men who efface themselves against matter
Only the fine flax of rapture's spinning heel
Shall dare to leave the lightness of threadless web
Across the waxen funnels buried in an impervious bed.
O beauty the nostrils of human flesh cannot inhale
Too deeply of the olive smoothness of these lilies
Or of their soft stem of gold.

Beauty, it is for you we swallow our tongues
And drying blood is set below the melted rock.

(the greyhounds)
And fleeting greyhounds
Like chariots of mist fled
With the breast of the east wind
Sweet with evanescent nostrils
While globes spun in the mist behind them.
Unmeasured whirling in the space of clouds
Brought thistles wild to seal the unclean crib.
And worms had no place to feed
For the fat of the flesh had become as steel
Where the eyes of the soul looked through.
Famine burnished the stubble
As destruction in the house of darkness
With the keenness of a vulture shall measure
The length of human travail
Heavy in the blood before it hardens to dust.
So was the song of tongueless men.
The incessant chatter of teeth swept
Against the scales of iron
Weighing the spinning universes' doom.
Speed will not dissolve the substance
Of the immutable soul
Nor drive it away from the unseen isles
Where breasts of honey pour out
The fragrance of the land
Though the east wind sinews the hounds of flight
With its scents heavy in the womb of time
Then shall the hungry sit to see the barren made bare,
And machines shall shatter the heat of the flesh,
Break the skin with monotony;
And they shall speak, shall understand
The crackle of the dying void
Sharp against the pressure of the steel's spread.
But the league of greyhounds' bones
Wet to the marrow with swift motion

Shall buffet the snow-drunk bowels of the heavens
Until no longer the enclosure of iron
Is the artificer of making spoils for the dead,
Nor the furnace to the consuming lips
That cry where there is no cry.
O ephemeral flinty paws of speed
It is for you we fill our mouths
With the flesh of our fingers
And fence our vitreous muscles
Against the inflexible subjection of mechanisms.

(two kings)
The creeping locust swept across his land
Licking meat from the kettle of ointment,
And the king with the voice of an organ
Though his impenetrable gates are closed
Shall eat the sweat upon the walls of dust.
From his lungs as the wind mouldered through them
Rose a hundred pipes in a symmetrical tone of one
Fluting for the semination of his people's seed.
But this king lay close to the pomegranate bush
Ever barren of blossom and fruit
And whetted his wrath upon the potency of his loins.
The organ voice of him swayed the willow's litheness
As he beat his knuckles of brass
Against the lean solemnity of their residue of flesh.
His perpetuity is to waste away, be gall upon the land?
The asp of the age had no filth to feed upon
While the indignation of the innocent
Mocked at the misery as he weighed
The discursion permeating his people's mind.
(O disimpassion and dilution will spawn
In this ravaged and destitute land.)
The fingers of his land stripped the leaves of the olive
Before they drank the sap of the limbs

Where branches bore no milk for blossom nor fruit.
The habitation of the oppressed shall no longer
Wear the raiment as dust upon water
Heavy with the flood of darkness and decay
Though the bodies' wall shall cry out
As the withering fruition of the navel multiplies.
The teeth of mind nerved of stone
Shall trumpet the horns of the mountains
To hush the captivity of the locust king:
Who without the increase of human habitation
Digs the sand with sharpened travail.
O multitude of night seasons
The loosening of his fibered joints
Pours out the only fluid for the co-ordination of dust.
The flesh of his groins boils
As the womb is unrefreshed.
The broth of his bones shall go up as vapor
Though the eyes shall fasten upon the tentacles
Of his substance when shall the synthesis come
And the codling moth undo destruction in the house
As the flakes of flesh cool the water of the mind?
The king without the respiration of human creation
Is incensed by the lack of power in his palace
As he goes to measure the proportions of the earth,
The wheels of the wind.
The wasting of his people's loins
Will be warmth to his land?
Let his ears be as the weight of stone
For his people's vintage of mind
Has the resonance of a throat-singing viol,
Not the bowels of the marrowed earth
Nor the dung of the dispersed sea.

MERLE HOYLEMAN

DEATH OF A GIRL

I

HE appeared quite calm when he purchased the railroad ticket; yet only two hours had passed since he received the telegram.

That morning he was on his way to the anatomy lecture when the office-girl called up the stairs to him, "O, Mr. Hudec, you'd better go back to your rooms. Mrs. Robbins just called up over the phone. A telegram came for you just after you left."

Stephen remembered to say, "Thank you, Miss Warner," and left the school building. Down the steps and out into the street his feet carried him. As he hurried along Euclid Avenue the three blocks to his rooms, he tried to guess what the telegram might be.

The presentiment in his heart chilled him. Something must have happened to Geneva. Last week he had written to her as usual, but he had received no answer for five days. Then two days ago had come the letter from her sister, telling him that Geneva had suddenly become seriously ill. Scarlet fever — Geneva taken to contagion ward of City Hospital — he was

not to worry — everything would be all right — but he must write every day because she wanted to hear from him — and he would hear often from Geneva's sister. He had replied immediately. A frantic letter full of his bewilderment, his terror. How did it happen? How sick was Geneva? Should he come home? And he had continued going to his classes at the medical school, though in his feverish anxiety he understood little that he heard or did in the laboratory. Now the telegram.

In the doorway to his room stood old Mrs. Robbins, her starched figured calico dress standing stiffly away from her shrunken body, her sunken cheeks vermilion with rouge, her white bobbed hair neatly parted.

"There it is on the table, Stephen." Her shrill voice had become a soft whisper. "The boy said it was a death message." Then she repeated as if he hadn't heard. "The boy said the two stars meant it's a death message."

Stephen walked weakly to a chair and sat down. He grasped the envelope, but for a moment dared not open it. His hands had grown feeble, every muscle fatigued, every nerve heated.

He noticed that the landlady still stood in the doorway. Wouldn't she ever go away? Couldn't she see that he wanted to be alone? As if she had seen the thought frown from his mind, Mrs. Robbins edged away from the door, turned abruptly, and went slowly down the hallway into the kitchen.

A momentary trembling shook Stephen. He opened the envelope, unfolded and read the telegram.

The wire was short. — Geneva passed away two thirty this morning. — It was signed by Dr. Berkman, her uncle.

At first Stephen merely noted somewhat scornfully the euphemistic "passed away". Then he grasped the full import of the wire. He refused to believe it. Impossible. Geneva dead? His girl, his sweetheart? No, it was a joke. It was a joke. And a damned poor joke! He became angry. Who would pull a stunt like that on him? His mind ran quickly over a list of

persons. He would certainly show them where a joke should end.

But to his astonishment he began to weep. Hot tears filled his eyes and burned the sockets. The tears flooded over and rolled down his face. He was divided between the emotions of grief and surprise at his grief; in a minute, however, his surprise left him, and he put his hands to his face.

He became distantly aware that Mrs. Robbins was standing in the hallway, that she was looking in, humble and pitying, abashed at his grief. When she saw that she was noticed, she edged away again.

Stephen tried to stop his tears. He thought of several things he had to do. He called the railroad station and learned that the next train for Cleveland was leaving a little after noon, in about three hours. Remembering that he had no money, he asked Mrs. Robbins to lend him twenty-five dollars, and promised to send her the sum as soon as he reached home. He gathered together some shirts and underwear, and threw them into the bag. But all the time he was aware of doing these things in a dull way, distantly, as though his entire body had been numbed by cocaine injections, and stimuli had to pass through a padding of deadened flesh before striking his senses. And he recalled the blunt feeling when the gum has been anæsthetized and the dentist is pulling at some remote tooth that seems not to belong to the body at all.

The three hours till train time seemed interminable to Stephen.

Suddenly he decided to take a bath. His skin felt hot and sweated. The water was cool and clean. As he splashed the water over his body, Stephen recalled a day two years before.

He was alone in the histology laboratory with Elmer and Oscar. It had been but two weeks since he first met Geneva, and he wanted very much to tell the fellows about her. He feared their ridicule, and tried to convey his feelings in non-

chalant and worldly words; but all the time, his talk sounded in his ears like patched movie titles. The fellows were listening, amused, superior, now and then throwing in a mocking word. Still Stephen felt he had to talk.

"Have you kissed her yet?" Elmer asked.

Before Stephen could reply, Oscar said scornfully, "Kissed her! Our little Romeo! Say, I'll bet he hasn't even put his arm around her."

Elmer's sly jeer and Oscar's obvious taunt were unbearable. In his indignation Stephen thoughtlessly fell into their trap and exclaimed, "Who didn't! I did put my arm around her. The other night when we were out driving, I embraced her in the back of the machine!"

Oscar seized on this immediately. "O, ho! Listen to Stephen! He embraced his girl in the back of her machine. Shame on Stephen!"

And the two fellows, laughing loudly, danced derisively around him, stroking one index finger with the other. Stephen's face turned red with shame, and tears came to his eyes. Why hadn't he kept his mouth shut? Many weeks passed before Elmer and Oscar quit ridiculing him about his amorous potency.

Stephen lay a long time in the bathtub, remembering how much anguish that trivial episode had caused him. Served him right, trying to boast of his love. And now it was indeed trivial in the face of death. He couldn't believe it; he couldn't visualize Geneva dead for all time. He became impatient to be on his way home, so that he might verify the telegram, see the dead with his own eyes. He began to cry again, this time with less pain; his sockets didn't burn as before; but he felt powerless to stop his tears.

Suddenly he had the desire to see his face; to be weeping was a strange sensation. He got out of the tub and walked over to the mirror, the water dripping from his body, his feet leaving imprint puddles on the bathroom floor. In the mirror

he saw his face, his lips parted slightly, his eyebrows drawn together, creating vertical wrinkles in the skin between them, his hair mussed where he had run his fingers through it, a red feverish glow on the rims of his eye-sockets. So that was how the face appeared in sorrow. He kept his face distorted in order to study it.

Then he realized that he had forgotten his grief in his cold curiosity. He became conscious of a feeling of shame. What was he doing? Was his sorrow mere sham? His tears counterfeit? How could he at a time like this observe himself as though he were a stilted actor in some cheap movie? He reproached himself with being insincere, and he began to wonder whether he were capable of genuine feeling unadulterated by self-consciousness. He dried himself quickly and went into his room, where he gazed intently at the picture of Geneva on the dresser to recapture his former feeling and drive away his doubts. After a few minutes of strained effort to bring back his grief, Stephen gave up and started downtown to the station.

When he bought his railroad ticket there was still an hour to train time. An hour seemed to him endless, impatient as he was to be at home. The thought of the fourteen-hour train ride ahead of him made him even more restless, until his legs tingled as though they would fall off if he didn't move them violently.

Stephen sent two telegrams, one to his mother and the other to Geneva's uncle, telling them when he was coming home. Then he checked his bag. He couldn't eat, because his stomach was unsettled; so he hurried out into the street. He would walk about until the time for leaving.

The sun directly overhead was mellow, its heat tempered by the haze of smoke and dust resting over the city. It was nearly noon; Market Street was bustling with workers and clerks hastening to the restaurants. Stephen, walking slowly and without aim, was jostled heedlessly. Laughing girls in

threes and fours, women with bundles, men in twos talking earnestly, women dragging children, young men with girls clinging to their arms.

He caught himself peering into the faces of the girls he passed, looking for Geneva. Once he saw at a distance a head in profile. It was Geneva's; her copper hair, the color of a new penny, bobbed, too, like hers. He grew faint, and dark spots stood before his eyes. As he came nearer, the girl turned her face toward him; he looked away quickly and went on.

The pounding of steel against steel assailed his ears. The framework for a building was going up. Stephen looked up, half-wondering, half-pitying. It seemed to him unjust that everyone shouldn't realize that his sweetheart had died. Yet here were men stirring about their tasks. He recalled a phrase he'd once read of maggots crawling about their trifling duties.

Lines from Ecclesiastes came to his mind: "Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labor that I had labored to do; and, behold, all was vanity and a striving after wind, and there was no profit under the sun." As he walked he declaimed the passage under his breath, afterwards reflecting upon it with bitterness. But then he came to an abrupt stop, and clenching his fists savagely till the knuckles stood out big and bloodless, he cried, "For Christ's sake, Stephen! What the hell's the matter with you? Being a character in some book again. Geneva dies so you can call to mind and declaim Ecclesiastes!"

The shrieking beats of a steam-riveter, like machine-gun fire, pierced his ears. He put his hands to his ears, and unwillingly imaged the relations of the malleus, incus, and stapes within the tympanic membrane. Shaking his head as if trying to rid himself of the intruding school-lesson, he began to walk rapidly, until he noticed that people were turning to look at him. His feet slackened and he turned into a side street. There he again quickened his pace; but the stream of persons

was endless, and slowing down somewhat, Stephen turned into Pine Street.

He had often wondered how he could get along with so middle-class a girl as Geneva; that is, he wondered so, although he thought of marriage only as some remote possibility. For thinking of things was almost as actual to Stephen as doing them, and he often confounded thought with action, so that imagining himself married to Geneva served in place of the reality.

Even if she was his sweetheart, Geneva was as middle-class as her home. Red brick house, bedrooms on the second floor, and front porch with swing. Upright piano in the parlor, plush armchair and davenport set, two floor-lamps with fringed silk shades, embroidered pillows on the chairs, little reading table with leather-bound gift editions of Keats and Wordsworth and Browning, double sliding-doors opening into dining-room. Here she, her sister, and her mother lived with her uncle and aunt. Here she had taken her piano lessons for five years, until she could bang off "Poet and Peasant". From here she took the street car every morning to go to the College for Women in the city, where she was an honor student and a senior, where she had won a Phi Beta Kappa key in her junior year, much to Stephen's annoyance, for he had no use for scholastic keys and grades.

Never had he heard mention of her father, about whom Geneva refused to talk. Yet Stephen gathered that he was probably living. Possibly there had been a divorce. Anyhow Geneva hadn't seen him since she was a child. Stephen was always uncomfortable in the presence of Geneva's mother, who had moral rigidity, a certainty of what was right and what wrong. Geneva had learned from her mother how to conduct herself with young men, and she told her mother every night exactly what she had done on her date.

Usually, after returning from some show or dance, Stephen would sit in the parlor with Geneva, on the stairs leading to

the second floor. She would seldom sit on the davenport, because it was near the windows and people passing by could look in. He would put his arm around her; but she would say "Don't!" loudly and emphatically when he tried other advances. Some nights she was cold to all his advances; prudish, Stephen would think; she wouldn't even let him kiss her. But other nights, especially after a dance, when her body had been in warm contact with his, she relaxed and forgot the code of what a good girl should not do. Stephen recalled how after the Junior Prom at her school, to which she had taken him, she had kissed him of her own will before he had even asked, and he had kissed in turn every part of her face. And twice he had put his hand on her dress over her breast; but after a few minutes she had quietly taken away his hand, and hiding her face, had cried for shame because she had wanted him to do that which wasn't right.

Sometimes, when she was dancing the Charleston, her breasts would shake up and down beneath her dress, her knees could be seen as she swung her legs, her eyes had a gleam that showed she was quite aware of Stephen's perceiving her breasts and knees. But more often she wanted to be "just friends", and all his questions, reasonings, demands failed to prevail. She had but to repulse his kiss and he was all afire. And he would become silent with helpless desire; and ashamed too, for his sexual excitement was quite apparent, and it seemed to him indecent in the presence of her coldness. He would try to hide his excitement from her, but even though she appeared not to notice, he was sure it was visible to her.

A radio loud-speaker in the doorway of a store blurted into Stephen's ear and halted his feet. "Many poultry men rotate their ranches so that the same ground is not used twice for the chicks." Stephen made a violent gesture, and he walked on. But the words kept marching in his brain as he walked, until he came again to Market Street. There he rid himself of the meaningless words by a decision to go to the Doubleday-

Page bookstore. He would certainly need something to help kill the fourteen hours on the train. He looked at his watch. Plenty of time to walk to the bookstore and get back to the station.

Just so he would walk in the evening along Kingshighway, down into Forest Park, and back up Lindell Boulevard to the Cathedral, except that few people were out then. After he had finished studying for the evening at about nine or ten, he would go out. When he would meet couples, arms about each other, he would hurry by because he felt like an intruder. Sometimes, the couples would stare at him boldly, to show that they weren't at all self-conscious about being seen with their arms around each other's waist; sometimes they would quickly and guiltily disengage their arms. Always he noticed that their conversation would break off as he approached, and would not be resumed until he had passed, as though they feared that their talk, which sounded golden and true and poetic when they were alone, would in the presence of an outsider resolve itself into cheap commonplaces and trivialities, without glamour, prosaic, trite. Once in Forest Park he had come unexpectedly upon a couple on a bench, the girl seated partly on the fellow's lap, her dress folded back, the fellow stroking her thighs. Luckily they hadn't discovered him, and Stephen had turned quietly back. And he had pictured himself a wanderer on the outskirts of a world full of lovers, himself lonely.

When spring had come, bringing warm St. Louis nights, Stephen had taken rides on the open upper deck of buses on Kingshighway. There too he would be an intruder, for only couples would sit up there, whispering and kissing. And with the cool night wind on his face, Stephen would recall in reverie the many dances and parties to which he had taken Geneva. And he would see before him her round face, her white teeth and dark brown eyes. But as his imagination would stimulate his desire, her image would fade

away; and the fiercer his desire grew, the fainter was her image, all his efforts to make it distinct proving vain. Then he would shut his eyes and picture himself with Geneva in the full heat of the sex act. Always there would be a severe reaction, and Stephen would compress his lips in utter self-abasement.

Usually before he knew it, it would be the end of the line. Then he would have to pay another fare and wait till the bus turned back. Once he got off somewhere in the south section of the city, and walked back to his room, through Bellefontaine, the original French district, where some of the streets were still paved with old cobblestones.

When he was being observant, a spectator of life, he would be amused by the vanity of the fellows he saw with girls. They would straighten up, protrude their chests, and draw in their bellies, to indicate what powerful males they were. And especially on the dance-floor were they ridiculously vain. They would execute their clumsy steps and would always look to the bystanders for approbation.

Yes, and what about yourself? What do you do on the dance-floor? Jerk through your glides. Go through that turn you think is so exquisite. Then look with superior amusement at the other fellows, so awkward, you know. And when Stanley would laugh at you, he was simply envious. There couldn't be a possibility of your not being a fine dancer.

And what of the stories you'd make up about yourself to tell Geneva? That first time you met her at Helen's party. You were a brilliant young biologist at the university. Only a junior, but certain to be made an assistant in the lab. Doing such important experiments with tadpoles. Professor Eller's right hand man. Counting facets in the eyes of drosophila. Didn't you make her eyes pop, though?

Sitting on the floor near her chair too. Not merely a cold scientist, but also romantic, poetic. Different. Hooked your knee between your clasped hands and leaned back against

the wall, looking through half-lowered lashes at the other persons present, so full of thought, so full of imagination, so full of understanding. And casting a glance sideways now and then to see if she was properly impressed. Quite the romanticist.

Writing letters to her this year from St. Louis. Always something interesting to say. Invent the incidents if necessary. Everything you did was important, had color. The very first letter after you arrived here. Your first glimpse of Mississippi, famous Papa of Waters, as train swung around bend. You were shaving and cut yourself, didn't you? Yes you did. Like hell! And your glowing description of the Riviére des Pères, river of the fathers — an open sewer with used rubbers and gobs of spittle floating on the surface of the filthy water. Familiar essayist, with every contact between you and the universe a momentous collision.

Yes, and those periods of humility. Shrinking from all meetings with people. Walking along one side of street, trying to make yourself as small as possible. So humble. Wanted to impress no one. Wanted everyone to see how humble you are. All aggressive personalities would simply bowl you over, but you'd be like the reed and bend submissively, only to fly back to original shape after the wind passed by. If there were a God, you wanted him to overlook you. Cowered down into yourself, so He couldn't see you. A hermit in the middle ages, weren't you? Lashing yourself. Crying out to God, "Unworthy, I'm unworthy, O Lord. See me a sinner!" Wearing haircloth next to your skin. Fasting. A martyr with lacerated skin and emaciated body, sores, ulcers, ribs sticking out. Martyr. Masochist. Shit.

Stephen had come to the bookstore. It was cool, quiet, secluded. He could collect himself here. His hands wandered over some of the books on the shelf, but the titles were unseen by him. A voice at his side brought the focus of his eyes back to the bookstore.

"Were you looking for something special?" A woman was speaking to him. "Can I help you?"

Yes, he wondered if she had Francis Thompson's poems. She had them. Stephen paid for the book.

Once more in the street, Stephen looked at the book, puzzled at his choice. Why Francis Thompson, who was only a name to him? He slipped the poems into his pocket and looked at his watch. Almost train time. He would have to hurry.

II

THE coach was almost empty. Across the aisle, three seats behind Stephen, were two salesmen, and phrases of their jargon drifted to his ear — ninety days, terms, territory. Further back were a woman and child; the woman relaxed, her head resting against the back of the seat, weary, patient; the child restless, ever changing its position, now on its knees to look out the window, now staring at the two salesmen, now climbing unheeded over its mother's lap and bosom.

For an hour now Stephen had listened to the tedious pounding of the wheels over the rail-joints, and innumerable times had he pulled out his watch, innumerable times consulted the time-table. By means of four important stops between St. Louis and Cleveland, Stephen had divided the entire distance into five parts; then he had further subdivided each part, so that at each stop the train made he could look to see what fraction of the part was covered, and calculate how much of the whole was left. As a child he would make such divisions whenever he had far to walk, and as he approached his destination, would proportionately increase the number of divisions still before him, thus pretending that he was no nearer to the end, and receiving a feeling of joyful surprise when he finally did reach his destination.

He had also remembered that there was an hour's differ-

ence in time between St. Louis and Cleveland, and that when he would arrive at 2:25 a.m., it would be only 1:25 in St. Louis; but he refused to set his watch ahead, deciding to save that as something to look forward to.

After sitting listlessly for a few more minutes, Stephen, remembering the poems he had bought, began to thumb the pages, hardly cognizant of what he saw, when suddenly he found himself reading these lines:

> To him that waiteth, all things!
> Even death, if thou wait!
> And they that part too early
> May meet again too late: —
> Ah, fate!
> If meeting be too late!

The words seemed a judgment on him. But what could he have done? No money. In debt for his schooling. And still three years of medical school ahead of him. Couldn't get married on nothing.

But he had spoken to Geneva about the possibility of marriage after he graduated from medical school; and the last night they were together, under the emotional stress of parting he had sworn that he would be true. Too proud to expose her fears, Geneva had merely hinted, with manifest slyness, that he would find other girls in St. Louis. Again he had sworn that for him there would be no other. In turn, displaying his tolerance, he had begged her not to stay at home, but to go out with other fellows. Yet when she had said nothing to commit herself to a solitary life, he had been disappointed; nor would he admit to himself that his tolerance had been just a display, and that inwardly he had hoped that she would declare her purpose of living like a recluse, thinking only of him. Later he tried to reason with himself: she was but a normal girl, he couldn't expect her to stay home every evening.

And he had come to St. Louis full of enthusiasm for his future calling, full of visions of himself discovering new cures, for cancer, for tuberculosis. When he was dissecting his cadaver, he was going to be a skilled anatomist, bringing to light the most delicate structure of tissues; in the chemistry laboratory he was metamorphosed into a renowned metabolism expert; and during the period he was studying neurology, his life's work became psychiatry. Always he studied diligently, seldom going anywhere, except to a Sunday movie, seldom reading books, except the life of Sir William Osler. Always there shone before him a glorious future joined to a companionship with Geneva.

In his letters to Geneva he had tried to picture his life and to convey to her some of his enthusiasm. She had read in his letters of that first day in the dissecting lab, of his hesitancy before lifting the oilskin that covered the cadaver, of his greater hesitancy and excitement just before piercing the cadaver's skin with his scalpel — cutting human flesh for the first time. Then had come stories of his rapid hardening, so that he was soon able even to pat unconcernedly the cadaver's hair, in which was entangled a slate-gray jelly-slime composed of old lint, preserving fluid, pus, and mucous from the cadaver's skin.

One afternoon when none of the instructors were around, Stephen and his dissecting partner had, with mock solemnity, christened the cadaver Ovid Rameses Goldstein ♂. Then Stephen had cut out of Ovid's skin a large G, which he sent to Geneva, gleefully picturing to himself the shock it would give her.

He had joined the other fellows in their pranks — hanging intestines out of the window to dry, throwing livers at one another, secretly putting chunks of lung in visitors' pockets. He was vain of his long white dissecting gown, treasuring each business-like grease spot on it; and he liked to be seen in it by passers-by, trying then to appear serious and im-

portant, — life and death depended on his skill. He had written at great length after attending his first operation, describing to Geneva the amputation of a puffed, blue, gangrened leg, telling her how one of the first-year students turned green, stumbled up the stairs of the amphitheatre, and vomited in the hallway while all the others laughed.

To all his stories Geneva had replied with detailed reports of her daily activities — her exams at school, her classes, her walks and visits, the concerts and shows she attended. Often she wrote the gossip current about the people they knew. Subconsciously he was aware of the triviality of her doings, and he wondered why he liked to read of them, why, in fact, he could hardly await the arrival of each letter.

Whenever he was downcast or disheartened, she had written words of encouragement and advice. But he always wished she hadn't, for her advice and encouragement had sounded too much like the cheaply sentimental verse of Edgar Guest or James Whitcomb Riley. That time when Sawyer's mother had died, and Stephen had written how Sawyer, out of school for a week, had been found delirious in his room, and had been taken to the hospital, where he had slowly recovered, Geneva's letter had made Stephen snort impatiently, for she had quoted Tennyson's often-mouthed lines:

> 'Tis better to have loved and lost
> Than never to have loved at all.

Put a nickel in the slot and out comes maxim appropriate for the occasion — moral precept in balanced sentence, consolatory couplet, nicely decorated rule for human conduct, aphorism embodying great universal truth. It had been hard for Stephen to reconcile these bits of platitudinous wisdom with the image of his beloved, and many of her letters had thus disturbed him, making him wonder how such stale sentiments could come from so sweet a mouth. However,

he always ended by forgiving her, though Geneva never knew that she had been near falling from grace. And he would say to himself that he loved her anyhow, in spite of her shortcomings. Even because of her shortcomings.

It was useless trying to read, he couldn't keep his mind on the poetry. He leaned his head back on the seat and closed his eyes. The pounding of the train went on, unceasing. The drone of the salesmen's voices. The cry of the child begging for its mother's attention.

Late in the afternoon the train entered Indiana. For some time Stephen had been gazing out the window at the low hills, at the frequent farmhouses with the pigs and chickens near by. Now his eyes were tired of following objects backward until the train left them behind, and he tried fixing his eyes straight ahead, refusing to change his focus, but rigidly keeping his gaze on the ever-new horizon that the train window brought within his vision. Soon he gave it up. The effort of will required was much too fatiguing. Above his eyes was a dull ache as though some blood-vessel were throbbing against the bone.

His eyes stared unseeing at the dusty, specked windows. Heat-baked dust. The passion of jealousy, whose heat bakes the tissues into a dry stinging dust. The sting returned as he remembered the jealousy that had seized him at the familiarity existing between Walter and Geneva. Once Walter had stroked Geneva's hair, saying how lovely it was, and Stephen had been thrown into a sullen rage because another had dared to do casually what he himself had dared only after much timid hesitation. Nor did he like the way Walter would grab Geneva's arm in the summer time, when her dresses were sleeveless; it had seemed almost carnal contact, falseness on her part.

More burning even had been his jealousy one night when he had asked Geneva to go to a college show with him. She already had a date for that night, she was so sorry, why

hadn't he called her earlier? Unable to think of anything to say that would hide his chagrin, he had hung up the receiver.

In his jealous rage he had torn up one of the tickets. He would punish her by going alone. Couldn't she have broken her date for him?

At the show he had seen her. With a sickly, bespectacled little red-head, a fellow he had often seen on the campus, but had never considered worth talking to. Did she prefer that emaciated runt to him? Well, she could have him! Stephen had pretended not to see her, even though she was seated but two rows behind him. He had sat stiffly in his seat, unhearing, plotting tumultuous scenes of which he was playwright, stage manager, and star actor — scenes in which he would repudiate Geneva with a witheringly disdainful gesture. Thus he had sat glumly engrossed throughout the play, meditating contemptuously on how anyone could laugh at the inanities being proclaimed on the stage. Once he had glanced back quickly at his rival and had seen the little red-head's profile, mouth jerked open and teeth showing in stupid laughter. Geneva, too, appeared to be enjoying the show. Well, let her! She had caught his eyes and had raised her eyebrows slightly, as if to rebuke him for some childish act.

As soon as the curtain had gone down, Stephen had grabbed his hat and coat, for he didn't want to talk to her after the show. He was afraid to meet her, afraid of making an ass of himself in the presence of his rival. Besides, he wanted her to realize how badly she had hurt him.

That night he had walked home. As he had crossed the campus, he had gritted his teeth and narrowed his eyes in disillusionment. She was no better than any other girl. She had done him a bitter injury. He had decided that she didn't value his love, that she didn't care for him, and he resolved never to call her again. If she wanted him, she could call up. He had taken out his sophomore class pipe, filled it with tobacco, and lit it. Man of the world, reflecting cynically.

But walking through the park, he had begun to defend her against his own accusations. After all, she couldn't help it. How could she have known he was going to ask her for a date the last minute? And could he expect her to be rude to the redhead, who wasn't to blame at all? The very next morning Stephen had called her again.

It was already dark when the train pulled out of Indianapolis. There were a few more people in the coach, not many though.

Stephen felt very tired. His head ached sharply now. So far he had not been out of his seat once, and he had eaten nothing since the eggs and coffee at breakfast. He was feverish. Partly due to constipation, he thought. He didn't want anything to eat. There was a stale sour taste in his mouth, like that during the morning when he had smoked too many cigarettes the night before.

Still more than half the journey lay before. Endless. It seemed as if this train ride would go on forever; nothing else was real but the pounding of the wheels and the jerking of the coach. Medical school was some alien experience, a vague memory. Had he actually been on his way to the anatomy lab that morning to clean muscles and to trace nerves and blood-vessels in the head of Ovid Rameses Goldstein? Nor was Cleveland any more real. Yet here he was riding inevitably there, and tomorrow morning he would see Geneva laid away in a grave.

Why, only last year he had been at school with her, running across the campus to meet her, loitering in front of certain halls so that he could be found unexpectedly in case she did come out, even taking a seminar in sociology merely because Geneva was in the class.

Then there had been his meetings with Geneva when he was stage-manager for the Temple Players, an amateur theatrical group. It was Stephen's business not only to design the sets, but also to build them; for although other

members of the group were supposed to help in the building, they were so eager to strut on the stage as actors that they had no time or desire to do any of the work. But Stephen didn't mind the lack of help; in fact, he was rather glad to be left alone. His workshop was in the attic of a settlement house, far off from any of the other rooms in the building. Here it was that, when he was making the checker-board settings for "Master Pierre Patelin", Geneva would come to help paint the black and white squares on the flats.

Always in the afternoons when Geneva was to come, Stephen would wait impatiently, making an effort to pass the time by doing some work, but never succeeding, because after each nail he pounded he was certain that he heard someone on the stairs, and he would have to run down to see if it was Geneva. And then he would return slowly to the workshop, less patient, less able to work. This would happen three, four, even five times, and his disappointment would grow keener at each return to the workshop, so that when Geneva finally would come, his elation would be cooled by his successive disappointments, and he felt rather irritated, like one who has too often been frustrated in some hope, or like one who waits for a friend on a long overdue train. Nor could he find the proper words to convey his vague sense of bafflement; and, as a result, there would be a puzzling coldness between them at first, contrary to all his expectations and beyond her understanding.

But by the time he helped her off with her coat and held her green cotton smock while she put her arms into the sleeves, and mixed the paints and showed her what to do, the puzzling coldness would vanish.

While she would paint, Stephen would simply stand and watch her, correcting her now and then, or getting the materials she needed. And he would be glad that she could see him in his tan overalls, paint-bespattered, for in them he felt more a man and less a nineteen-year old boy.

And after a time he would see the firm curve of the loins in her crouched body, and think of the soft skin underneath her dress, and desire would beat in his blood; he would want to take her in his arms, to kiss her face and throat and breasts. But as soon as he would put his arm around her, she would look at him pleadingly and say, "No, please don't, Stephen. Not that. Please." And he would release her, detesting himself, partly for having disclosed his heated desire, and partly because he had not ignored her plea and forced her out of her conventional modesty.

Then as twilight fell, she would put aside the brush and say that it was time for her to start home. He would beg her to stay a little while longer, but she would be firm; nor would she let him accompany her, saying that already she had kept him long enough from working; and then she would look at her work, laughing because it was so little and asking him archly what good she was there, since he alone could do three whole flats in the time both of them together did half a flat. He would smile sadly to her, as to a child, as though to say that she could never understand what her visits meant to him in this workshop apart from the world and all other people.

If the weather was bad, he would have to help her put on her galoshes. She would be seated, and as he would kneel before her, he would want to put his hands on her dress so that he might feel the softness and warmth of her thighs; but again she would gently forbid him, then rise to go, sometimes kissing him before she left.

And Stephen would be alone, beginning to anticipate the next afternoon she was to come again, hoping that next time she could be induced to discard her timidity and modesty, reproaching himself for not having the courage to overcome by force the conventionalism that he was sure was only superficial, tasting beforehand the joy of kissing her face and throat and breasts.

Now as he sat in the coach, thinking of the training her mother had given her, he doubted that Geneva's conventionalism had been only in the top layer. He had often considered how he would go about quieting Geneva's dread of every physical touch, how he would accustom her gradually to bodily contact and sexual desire.

A great pity for Geneva filled him: she had died a maiden, untouched by man, not knowing the joy of sex, knowing only its dreads, not having freed her desire from its cage of fears and repressions. Tears came to his eyes — tears of pity for Geneva and pity for himself.

Gushing again! He accused himself. Sentimentalist! Have compassion on me. Behold, everyone, how I suffer! Pity me my sorrow!

Stephen put his hand to his forehead. Skin hot and moist. Fever. Ought to eat something. But he wasn't hungry; in fact, the thought of food made his stomach heave, as if he were about to vomit. He looked at his watch. Ten-thirty. Still four hours. No. Three. He hadn't set his watch ahead yet. Long before, he had forgotten his division of the trip into parts and subparts, his attempt to bring order into this confused journey; and he was aware only of the aching strip over his eyes, of his fever, of the coat of grime and damp soot that choked his pores, of the stuffy odor of stale urine and sweat in the car, of the unrelenting pounding and rocking of the train.

Perhaps he could sleep a bit.

He closed his eyes, but for a long time no sleep came. When he dozed off once or twice, it was only to be jerked awake by the lurching of the coach. So he dozed, waking with a start every few minutes.

He was being pursued. Oppressive waves from some dim physical presence sought to crush him to the earth. He ran swiftly in a field, waste and desolate except for a stunted prickly stubble which caught at his feet as he stumbled

away from his pursuers. A dark green glow, shot through with blood-red, like the glow on the face of a rotting corpse, clung to the earth. There was no other light. He felt numb, senseless, cold, like charred wood whose every fiber has been consumed by an intense fire. Only his head was swollen and burning. Suddenly, making out in the green glow weird shadows thrown by bearded beasts, he began to sob loudly in his fear, gasping for breath, tearing the membranes in his throat.

Waking with a jerk, he was surprised to find himself in the train. His heart was beating fast and loud. He turned his head quickly. The two salesmen had stopped talking and were regarding him queerly; they had evidently heard him; he must have sobbed aloud. He would have to watch himself.

For the rest of the trip Stephen sat upright, afraid to try to sleep, a hot pain in his head, his eyes raw as if he had been out and awake all night, his hands clammy cold, all his mind numb.

There were many crossings now and the pounding of the wheels was louder and irregular. Green and red signal lights through the windows. Dark masses of factories and storehouses. Many tracks. Empty freight cars. The lake and Edgewater Park. The Flats with the blast-furnaces reddening the sky in the distance. The river. Cleveland, at last.

Few people were in the waiting room so late. Stephen saw his father with Dan and Louie, two of his friends. It was Dan who met him first, shaking his hand heartily, grabbing his bag, bustling about. Dan, a law student, hadn't changed; still a man of affairs, taking command of situations, a leader in all activities.

Louie took Stephen's hand, tried to say, "I'm sorry," but only the form of the words was seen on his lips; no sound came from his throat. Stephen's father, also unable to speak a word, embraced and kissed him. Over his father's shoulder, Stephen noticed that two taxi-drivers in a corner of the wait-

ing room were pointing out to each other and laughing at this spectacle of two grown men kissing.

Stephen was in the car with Dan, his father and Louie in the other auto. The concern they had shown for him had roused his grief again. He sat quiet, looking out at the empty streets and the dark dismal buildings.

From time to time Dan glanced sideways at Stephen, until, unable to contain himself any longer, he exclaimed with assumed exasperation, "See here, Stephen! I haven't seen you for seven months or more, and you sit mum as a dummy! Not a single word. How's St. Louis? How'd you like medical school?"

Stephen smiled pityingly and thought to himself: Dan means well, poor fellow, wants to cheer me up, artificial exhilaration, turn on the spigot, step right up gents.

After a few more minutes of silence, Dan spoke again, this time less cheerful, quieter, more serious. "See here, Stephen, buck up. We all know this hits you pretty hard. But you simply must buck up. Your mother is pretty well broken up about it already. If you look like this, like a man who has just puked, when she sees you, it'll make her feel all the worse. Don't you see?"

"It's all right, Dan. I'm just worn out after the damned thirteen hours on the train." Stephen's voice was dry, matter-of-fact. And he wondered, is Dan trying to work the old mush, the mother gag, you must bear up like a man, mother all broken up already, cheer her up, do your best for the old folks at home.

Dan babbled the rest of the way home — bits of gossip, reports of his progress at law school, news from the fellows they had known as undergraduates, advice on how to conduct himself. To all this Stephen replied nothing, except to ask once what time had been set for the funeral. It was to be at ten in the morning.

At the head of the stairs Stephen met his mother, her eyes

red with tears and full of anxiety. Crying out, "Stephen!", she began to weep in his arms. Stephen felt a lump gather in his throat. It wasn't fair. They were taking advantage of him, weeping in his arms, standing around and looking deeply sympathetic, regarding him closely to estimate how hard hit he had been. Made him feel like a ham actor making his entry for the big moment of a play.

He set his mother in a chair; and going into the bedroom, he took off his hat and coat. Then he got a glass of water in the kitchen, going from there into the bathroom, where he urinated, and saw in the mirror that his face was very pale, with black semicircles, blue-speckled, beneath his eyes. Meanwhile he had left everyone standing in the other room, at a loss for what to say, since the object of concern had gone so abruptly.

When he came out of the bathroom, his mother told him that there was some cake and hot coffee waiting on the table. But he didn't want any. As he said so, he saw that she was hurt, because all her preparations had been made for him, only to be ignored by him; and he would have eaten just to please her, had not Dan's words about doing the best for mother sounded in his brain. He couldn't do it; it would seem as though he were bearing up like a man in the best he-man tradition.

He told his mother that he was going to bed, and asked her to wake him at eight.

"Why so early?" she asked. "It's after three already, and you've been riding all day and night, and you're tired. I'll wake you at nine. That'll be time enough."

No, she was to wake him at eight, he had to shave and do several things in the morning.

In bed, Stephen lay quietly on his back, staring at the ceiling and listening to the murmur of hushed voices in the kitchen. It was a soothing murmur, indicating that friends were within call; and yet he was alone. He tried to think of

the funeral, to compel his mind to dwell on it, but it was useless; irrelevant and disconnected thoughts floated through his mind. Should he wear a black bow-tie? Maybe something gay? It would shock people. And he must have his large photograph of Geneva framed — one of those swinging frames he had once seen on a fellow's dresser. And he must send twenty-five dollars to Mrs. Robbins; she needed the money.

Twice he heard his mother tiptoe into the bedroom to see how he was resting, and each time he shut his eyes, pretending to be asleep, till she tiptoed out again.

He decided that he'd better try to get some sleep, but it pained him to close his eyes, for on the inside of his lids were fine needles that pricked his eyeballs. Drawing up his knees, he tried lying on his right side. Although his head was hot, his body felt chilled; so he pulled the covers round his neck. He shut his eyes.

It was a long dark street, lit only by a faint green phosphorescence that issued from the ground, and by this greenish emanation Stephen could see that there were hundreds of people hurrying along the street, some going in his direction, others in the opposite direction, their forms indistinct in the dim light. He was peering into the faces of the people streaming by, looking for someone. He could just barely perceive their features. Ahead he suddenly recognized a familiar form, and quickening his pace, he caught up with it and looked at it. Geneva. But she seemed not to know he was there, and walked rapidly, as if she were in a hurry to get somewhere.

For a time Stephen walked along at her side, trying to keep up with her, wondering where she was going, puzzled at her disregard of him. Then he began to talk to her, and though he couldn't understand his own words, which seemed a succession of unintelligible sounds, he knew by their tone that he was asking her where she was going, telling her that

he was Stephen, imploring her to stop and look at him. As if moved by his voice, Geneva stopped and turned toward him. Stephen now beheld the other half of her face, the side that had been hidden from his view. He started back in horror. It wasn't a face; it was a ghastly sore, like the picture in the medical text of a stomach ulcer, from which oozed a bile-green pus and a thin straw-colored serum like that which issues from an open wound in which the blood has been clotted. Half her face had been eaten away, as if by leprosy; only half her nose was left, on the healthy side of her face.

Terrified, Stephen wanted to scream. He tried, but couldn't, for each time he drew in his breath to scream, he found that he couldn't breathe out again. He began to gasp for air. The green phosphorescence died away, and Stephen could no longer see the people in the street; but he shrank from their presence, which weighed down on him. He made a violent effort to scream, and a distant, faint shriek came from his throat. He felt greatly relieved.

Stephen's mother was standing at his bedside when he opened his eyes. She looked at him anxiously and asked what was the matter. He replied gruffly, "Nothing," and asked her for a glass of water, his throat was parched. Bringing the water, she wanted to know if he wasn't too warm with all those blankets. Stephen said, "No," then turned over on his side and closed his eyes. His mother stood there for a few minutes, solicitous; but he appeared to be asleep, and she went back into the kitchen.

III

WHEN the auto stopped in front of the house, Stephen noticed that all the blinds were drawn. Geneva's uncle met him at the door and quietly took his hand, while a number of voices inside exclaimed at once, "Here's Stephen! Stephen's

come!" And the voice of Geneva's sister repeated, "Mamma, here's Stephen! Stephen's come. Don't you want to see Stephen?"

The parlor, which Stephen had been accustomed to seeing empty and lamp-lighted, was now filled with people, chiefly women in groups, constantly sniffling, dabbing at their eyes with handkerchiefs, blowing their noses, and finding time between their tears to discuss the death and to be concerned about the preparations for the funeral. The few men in the room stood each by himself, silent, solemn, uncomfortable.

Geneva's mother, lying huddled on the davenport, was moaning in a low monotone, "My baby. I want my baby. My baby. I want my baby." On the floor near her knelt Geneva's sister, while Geneva's aunt stood near by, wringing her hands and at intervals whimpering frightenedly.

From one of the groups a girl, a schoolmate of Geneva's, detached herself, and coming toward Stephen, cried out, "Oh, Stephen! Isn't it terrible? Isn't it just too terrible for words?" And she stood before him as though expecting him to take her into his arms to comfort her, until Stephen was led by his mother over to the davenport.

Stephen began to speak to Geneva's mother, "Mrs. Berkman . . ." When she turned her head with its swollen tear-inflamed eyes, he could not recognize in this little sorrow-wasted woman the determined and polite mother of Geneva. She said nothing, but burst into tears and began to wail, "My baby! I want my baby!"

Geneva's sister tried to comfort her. "Please, mamma, don't cry! It can't be helped now. Don't cry."

"I know it can't be helped," the mother cried. "But why was it Geneva? She was so wonderful. So young. Why did it have to be Geneva? There are so many ugly old women who live on forever. Why Geneva? She was so beautiful. My baby." And then she stopped weeping, and shaking her head weakly and incredulously she began to recite over and over

again in a dull voice, as if fixed by a single idea, "I can't believe it. I can't believe it. I can't believe it."

Beginning to feel faint, Stephen walked back to the piano bench and sat down. There were the steps on which he had sat with her so often; yet in his ears sounded the cries of her mother, the solacing words of her sister, the sniffling of the other women in the room. It was too much for him, and despite his efforts to control his feelings, he began to sob quietly. His mother, seeing his tears, pressed his arm as if begging him not to weep.

Two women had cornered Geneva's uncle near the imitation fireplace with its three toy logs.

"It was such a surprise to me, Dr. Berkman. Her death was so sudden. Why, it seems only yesterday that I saw her and talked to her!" said one of the women.

And the other echoed her. "Wasn't it sudden though? I was never so surprised. It was so terrible. She was so young!"

"Yes, it was quite unexpected," agreed Geneva's uncle. "She complained last Thursday that she wasn't feeling well. I examined her and found a temperature of 102. Well, it didn't look at all good to me, so I called in Dr. Liebermann, and we decided that she had scarlet fever. We took her to the hospital immediately, and she seemed to be coming out of it nicely. But Saturday night she began to have fever again and her throat was red and things looked bad to me. So I called Dr. Liebermann again. She had developed lobar pneumonia."

The two women shook their heads and clucked their tongues with concern.

"The disease spread quickly in her weakened body. Sunday night she was much worse, and we called in Dr. Turner, the specialist at the medical school. But nothing we could do seemed to help, and Monday afternoon she became unconscious, and yesterday morning at 2:45 she passed away."

Stephen winced again at the euphemism. He wanted to

declare harshly, "She didn't pass away. She died. She's dead." But he quickly forgave Geneva's uncle; he had taken better care of Geneva than if she had been his own child. Stephen remembered how strong was the affection between Geneva and her uncle, how he would tease her about her red hair, how she would quickly retort with a mild taunt on his bald head. "It's time we were getting Uncle Henry a new comb," or, "That's a fine part you have in your hair today, Uncle Henry." Then she would soothe him after her teasing by standing behind his chair, putting her arms around his neck, and kissing him on his bare pate.

Once she had quarreled with Stephen and had looked at him through cold, hating eyes, because he had unintentionally made a remark about her uncle that she took to be derogatory. Her uncle had an office on a busy corner, about a block from their home. He knew all the business people well, and spent much time with the corner pharmacist, who was an old crony of his. Stephen had innocently said off-hand that her uncle seemed to spend a lot of time hanging around the drug-store, and had not realized what he'd implied; but Geneva had taken offense immediately and had said something cutting. Stephen had stammered that he was sorry; yet it was an hour at least before she recovered her original feeling toward him.

One woman, who had been peeping outdoors every few minutes through the side of a blind, announced, "Here are the automobiles now! We ought to get ready."

In a moment the room awoke to activity — women looking for their coats, and counting those present to decide who would go in whose car. The men still stood about, not knowing what to do, getting in the way of the women, who had left off weeping entirely now, and whose voices were raised in giving directions, all speaking at the same time, all bustling about. In the confusion Geneva's mother was hardly heeded.

"Somebody run upstairs and get mamma's coat," cried Geneva's sister.

The request was relayed by other voices, till finally one of the men did go upstairs for the coat. Meanwhile the voices became louder and the directions more jumbled.

"Stephen ought to ride in the first car."

"No, the first car is filled already."

"Let Stephen and his mother ride in the second car."

"Who wants to ride with us?"

"Is anyone without a car?"

"It's ten o'clock already."

"We ought to start."

"Where do we go?"

"German Funeral Parlors? On Clark?"

"Yes, I know how to get there."

"Then do we go to the cemetery?"

At last everyone was seated in the proper auto, and the house was left empty and silent as the procession drove on to the Funeral Parlors.

There were many more cars and people waiting at the undertaker's when Stephen arrived. The numerous small groups that had been standing on the sidewalk and discussing the death became quiet and solemn as they made way for the family and the closer friends and relatives, who went into the reception room.

All the chairs in the reception room were occupied; so Stephen stood in one of the corners and leaned against the wall. He could see that people were pointing at him surreptitiously and whispering to one another behind cupped hands. Probably saying, there's her boy friend, yes, he's going to medical school, I think in St. Louis, I don't know whether he was engaged to her or not, he was going with her a long time, came all the way back from St. Louis, it's too bad, feel sorry for him.

In the next room, a small darkened mortuary, lay the

coffin with the body. Everyone was waiting until the immediate family and the close friends went in for a last look at the dead before the coffin was sealed; then the mourners were to proceed to the cemetery, where the last services were to be held in a chapel.

For some time now Mrs. Berkman had been in the mortuary, and Stephen could hear her sobbing and her whimpered protests, while Geneva's sister pleaded, "Mamma, please don't; mamma, please don't cry."

The women in the reception room set up a sympathetic sniffling, and handkerchiefs pecked at moist eyes. The sniffling grew to audible weeping when Geneva's mother was led back from the mortuary. In twos and threes the mourners went into the darkened room, staying there for a minute or two.

Stephen stood alone in the corner, listening to the blowing of noses as each group in turn went into the mortuary. He appeared devoid of emotion, simply staring at the opposite wall. His mother, frightened at his coldness, came up to him and timidly squeezed his arm. She didn't want him to stand so feelingless, with such lacklustre eyes. It was abnormal and made her afraid. She wanted him to weep, to show some feeling, to react like a normal person, to reassure her that he was all right.

Everyone in the reception room would turn and look, with the stupid stare of an idiot child, at the people as they returned from the small mortuary. After they reached their former positions in the room, the women would leave off sniffling, but would keep their handkerchiefs crumpled in their hands, as though ready for an emergency. Then Stephen could hear them talking about the corpse; only they would never say corpse, but would speak of "she". Isn't she dressed up beautifully? She doesn't look dead at all. Why, she looks as if she were asleep with her eyes shut, they put such a nice healthy red on her cheeks. And her hair

is so natural, that lovely copper color. These undertakers certainly do things nicely.

During these comments the outer door opened, and a rectangle of sudden, bright sunlight fell into the room. Two young men entered, and everyone stopped talking to gaze at the newcomers. Stephen smiled faintly to them in recognition — his friends, Stanley and Joe. The two crossed the room to Stephen. Stanley tried to say something, but his throat was too full, and he embraced Stephen and kissed him. Then he turned aside and stealthily wiped away his tears with his coat-sleeve, while everyone watched with interest this curious meeting. Joe only pressed Stephen's hand. For a time the three stood, unable to say a word.

The undertaker's assistants came through the room to get the coffin. But Geneva's sister cried out, "Stephen hasn't seen Geneva yet! Stephen must see Geneva!" And other voices repeated, "Stephen hasn't seen Geneva yet!"

Led by his mother, Stephen went into the mortuary. The casket rested on a low table, which, because of the gloom and the wax-yellow artificial-looking flames of the four candles at the corners, seemed an altar in a church. Stephen noted that the casket was spotless white, with ornamented handles along the sides, and with scrollwork carved in the wood. It must have been expensive, he thought, and remembered a magazine article about the undertakers' racket, how they took advantage of the mourner's grief, and charged him a good price for all kinds of unnecessary accessories.

Inside the casket under a glass plate lay the corpse, clothed in white. Only the head, the throat, and one hand were visible, the hand lying over the breast as though it had fallen there in sleep.

Stephen looked at the corpse, repelled and yet fascinated by its ugliness. The corpse wasn't even a corpse. It was a bloated wax image, a smooth, painted doll, with cheeks

unnaturally full. None of the ravages of the disease were to be seen. This wasn't Geneva. It was an artificial monster. Face swollen and distorted like an image seen in the back of a spoon, cheeks painted red, lips with a purple coming through the carmine, skin sickeningly oil-smooth. The lovely hair made the face even more a caricature. And the hand lay on the breast like a puffed flesh-color rubber glove. What had the damned undertakers done? Couldn't they even leave him the assurance that the dead was really dead? For seven months he hadn't seen Geneva. Now he wanted once more to see her, but as she actually appeared. He could make allowances for disease and death. They weren't pleasant, but they were real. And here she had been transformed into a wax doll, an inhuman toy, hideous and repulsive.

Feeling irritated and cheated, Stephen stood gazing at the corpse. His mother, standing at his side, had whimpered at first; but as he stood staring, emotionless and cold, she began to think that he was sneering, and she became frightened again, and drew his arm close to her body.

As soon as Stephen returned with his mother to the reception room, he could hear the assistants nailing the cover to the coffin.

The coffin was carried out to the hearse. Everyone got up and went out to the cars.

Through the sedan window Stephen saw the people in the street stop to look at the slow-moving funeral procession, and recalled how he had also turned his head when such processions went by, and had pitied the family in the first car and thought solemnly of death for a few minutes.

The last services in the chapel at the cemetery were to be conducted by the Reverend Dr. Lybrook, one of the most prominent ministers in Cleveland, and highly popular as a speaker. To have him at weddings and banquets and funerals was the thing to do in Cleveland. Lybrook was tall and hand-

some, with long silver-gray hair, with a full, low voice whose sound he liked. He intoned his words, allowing his voice to quaver and break at the climax of a jeremiad.

When Stephen entered the chapel behind Geneva's mother, almost all the seats were taken, except for the front row, which had been reserved for the family. The seats were arranged in an oval, at the center of which stood the bier surrounded by many wreaths. The chapel resembled an operating amphitheatre, with the seats circling the center and rising in tiers.

After everyone was seated, the Reverend Dr. Lybrook arose and walked over to one end of the coffin, waiting there till the room gradually became silent. Stephen had heard Lybrook before and disliked him, thought him a cheap orator, a glib mush-spiller; and now his dislike turned to hatred, for Stephen considered Lybrook an enemy who was going to pollute his grief with stale platitudes and vulgar histrionics, and was going to cheapen it by spreading it through the community. Stephen wanted to keep his grief to himself. The others had no right to mourn for Geneva, to compete with him. And he listened with hostile ears to Lybrook's grave voice.

We are met on a sad occasion. Wheel of fortune turns and takes away loved ones and dear friends. Death when we least expect it. Family circle robbed of a loved one. Nothing can fill the blank. Everything that is dearest. The high-chair, playthings, little shoes, baby curls that are hoarded by the mother. Childhood memories sacred to a mother. Human nature. Weeping an outlet for human suffering. Mother has grief pent up in the chambers of her heart. Watch beside a dear one's bed. See Death's angel come. Experience of suffering is sanctifying. Holy sorrow.

Behind Stephen two voices were whispering.

"Say, isn't it a wonderful sermon he's delivering?"

"Yes, the Reverend is certainly good today."

"Well, I say he's just about the best in the city. I always go to hear him at his church."

An old man's insuppressible sobbing broke the stillness. Geneva's grandfather. A loud weeping set up, and Lybrook was forced to pause. The old man's sobbing was quieted to a suffocated groan, and the weeping hushed.

Stephen felt disgust rise in him as the preacher went on to a personal eulogy of the dead. Was the old hypocrite going to talk of Geneva when he hadn't even known her? Stephen wanted to shout, "Shut up, you ten-cent actor! Go home! We've had enough of you!" But the preacher intoned on.

Died so young. Life of promise cut short. A beautiful soul. That great area of life, the area which has to do with one's soul, the spiritual path of human nature. Accident of death cannot take away the love she has stored up in the hearts of all who knew her. Had a purpose in life. A love for the finer things. Looked out on life and saw it as a great mission. Bore a torch, the torch of spirit. True and fine nature. Lays a challenge before us; shall we trust in God and His mysterious ways, or shall we set up our puny minds in opposition to Him? There is joy even in sorrow, for she remains with us, a beautiful memory and a fine influence among her fellowmen.

Everyone rose for the prayer.

After the Amen, the six pallbearers, all students at the university, grasped the coffin, and with slow paces led the mourners to the raw brown hole in the green turf.

On the way to the grave, people were discussing the Reverend Dr. Lybrook's panegyric.

"Wasn't that a fine speech?"

"When he said that about her being a beautiful memory it was so moving I couldn't help crying."

"He's certainly a wonderful speaker."

"They say he's the best in the country."

"Well, he's the best I've ever heard, and I've heard a good many."

Stephen snorted, remembering how he had stood hidden in the passageway of the chapel at the funeral of Sawyer's mother, and how the minister and his assistant had passed out before anyone else after the service. The minister had rubbed his hands with satisfaction and had said to his assistant, "Well, that was a good talk. I guess I made them cry." And the assistant had nodded his head in obsequious admiration.

The preacher was pronouncing the last words. "Ashes to ashes, dust to dust."

Through Stephen's mind flashed the popular ending — "If whiskey don't get you, the women must."

Geneva's mother threw a flower into the grave, and the gravediggers began to scoop in the earth. The weeping began again at this last rite.

But Stephen felt dissatisfied, tired, swindled. He was too numb to feel sorrow any more. It was an exhaustion such as he had once experienced at a musical revue, when he had laughed so long and hard at the antics of three clowns trying to build a house that he unexpectedly found himself weak, breathless, and apathetic, no longer able to laugh, no longer wanting to laugh.

It was with a feeling of relief that Stephen climbed back into the automobile after his mother. In a short time he would be home.

SAMUEL YELLEN

THE THIRD DECADE

I

DEDICATION FOR MY DAUGHTER

TELL her I love
        she will remember me
always, for she
is of my tissues made;
        she will remember
these streets where the moon's shade
falls and my shadow mingles
with shadows sprung
from a midnight tree.

Tell her I love that I
am neither in earth nor sky,
stone nor cloud,
but only this
walled garden she knows well
and which her body is.

Her eyes alone shall make
me blossom for her sake;

contained within her, all
my days shall flower or die,
birthday or funeral,
concealed where no man's eye
finds me unless she says:
He is my flesh and I
am what he was.

II

GOOD FRIDAY

AT this day's midnight when the dead
set fiery crowns upon the living head,
it is the hour the bronze-belled phoenix sings
Good Friday from his throat; his quick noise brings
Christ God Silenus to the nave.

The crucifix
falls; Silenus kneels in prayer
(I am Silenus risen from his grave
and the body that I wear
still smolders with perpetual heat)
Hinge his ribs outward; see
how the soul (long gone) has left his dark anatomy
a city of bones, tall ruins, where
the moon travels.

The cock crows (poor blind phoenix)
and his requiem for midnight rises, fails
in spires that pierce the sun, his music vanishing
in April morning air.

HORACE GREGORY

INTENTIONS

"towards the destruction of rhetoric"

BY the time I had reached the age of twenty, it seemed to me that all "literature", as it grew more intelligent, moved ultimately in one of two directions. If its impulse was predominantly lyric, it moved away from the emotional affirmation of values towards what is known as "pure poetry" or "le monde du poème essentiellement fermé et complète en lui-même", a poetry governed only by the principles of aesthetics, the transcription, merely, of a lyric sequence, as perceived by the subjective organism of the writer; and this produced, for instance, the "Chamber Music" of James Joyce and the poems of Paul Valéry. If its impulse was intellectual, it moved towards the ultimate subject-matter, the subjective self, and resulted in the introspective soliloquies of Shakespeare, the Prophetic Books of Blake, the autobiographical prose of for instance Rousseau, Henry Adams, Yeats and Proust. And in both cases it then seemed to be approaching a point where it was only in spite of the writer's intelligence, and by force of some personal condition in him, that he continued to write at all, or, where he stopped writ-

ing "literature" and began to write for a definite ulterior purpose.

In myself I discerned both of these "literary" impulses, the lyric and the autobiographical, clearly distinct; and I had definite ideas of how each of them was to be manifested.

My notion of the nature of lyricism in general was very simple: a rhythm, a sequence, "the pulsation of an artery", the embodiment of this. Or, to describe it in another way: "beauty", as Jonathan Edwards had so brilliantly demonstrated in one of his early essays, could be defined as the perception of correspondences, or in the last analysis, the perception of equalities; lyricism was the transcription of this perception. I intended, in short, a poetry which should be this and nothing more, and in which the most subtle "pulsations" might be embodied with the utmost possible simplicity.

The lyric impulse as evinced in literature was almost always found adulterated with something else, an autobiographical impulse, an affirmation of values, a love of a certain kind of diction for its own sake. And it may be remarked in passing that there had even appeared as an additional complication, in the work of certain poets of the twentieth century, the idea that the poet should reflect in his work the work of his "predecessors" and so take his place in the "stream" of literature and be writing the poetry "inevitable" for his time — this tendency, which was in part a concomitant of the theories of evolution and the deluge of historical criticism, being exemplified in the poetry of T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound.

I considered it necessary, then, firstly to avoid using, in the process of transcribing a lyric impulse, any image or thought which might assume apart from its function in the lyric an intrinsic value of its own; and secondly to avoid seducing the reader by pure magnificence of diction, such as

makes Pound, Eliot, Marianne Moore, the later Yeats, such powerful intoxicants to all the lettrés of a couple of generations: eloquence, elegance, modernity. To use the most commonplace images and a diction which, less archaic than that of "Chamber Music" and less abstruse than Valéry's, should attain the directness of Donne's:

> "If they are two, they are two so,
> As stiff twin compasses are two. . . ."

It was not until a year or so later that, having written a number of poems in this direction, I realized that the lyricism in which I was interested could obviously be much better and more intensely transcribed in songs, or even in music without words, and that it might even be manifested in quite other ways.

To the Seamstress

The ends of reaching shadows go
The spiral known to all,
Their turning and a cabbage-row
Have brought me to your wall.

Through all the silences of heat
In cabbage and cocoon,
Incessant, your machine's repeat
Ignored the afternoon.

O you whose calm descends upon
The sill towards which you lean,
Why must it be so monotone,
The song of your machine?

What long-lost wanderer is he,
How many seasons gone,
For whom you play Penelope
By this green beach of lawn?

Listen when you rest again,
Alone, awake, and dream —
I will drum on my typewriter then
Counterpoint to your theme:

That through the forest to the spring
The way is green and long,
Birds that no one sees there sing
Fragments of another song;

But that rock and rivulet and verdure
Gleaming in the sunset's wake,
O lone one, always perjure
The promises they make.

And the essence of the process and of the poem finished, the essence of all this and of everything correlative: "the feigned ecstasy of an impulse unable to reach its natural end".

II

AUTOBIOGRAPHY interested me chiefly as a means of preserving and utilizing certain aspects and episodes of one's disconcertingly heterogeneous experience, aspects and episodes which as far as I could see then (at the age of twenty) could not be made use of in any other way. And this I wished to do without having to depict, like James and Proust, all the vicissitudes of a local society, and without insisting, like Adams and Proust at their most intense moments, on "the comedy and the tragedy" of experience in general. I would have written, concisely, the sort of clinical report which might have interested men like Ellis or Stekel or those eighteenth-century ladies who, says Benda, were "interested in the chemical composition of the objects on their dressing-tables".

Fragments of a work to be called

"THE BODY OF GARETH ENDOR"

I

In one wall of my first room, squarely in the middle of the wall, was a small stained-glass window: twin panes of colored glass, set as a double door. That was the portal to the world of fiction. Beyond it, beginning just on the other side, were the countries of the fairy-tales, and the places where I, in the long adventure-stories I made up about myself, repeatedly rescued from a lion the heroine with brown curls.

Once in a great while, for one reason or another, the little glass doors were opened, and then, for the time being, that fictional world would cease to exist; for it was then seen that what really lay beyond them was something quite different, although equally fascinating. They opened onto the great staircase. And in looking through, upon the stairway from which I was absent, I seemed to penetrate, by some infraction of the laws of time and possibility, into the world known as "what goes on in other parts of the house when I am not there".

The arrangement of the staircase was thus: from the end of the upper hall, or music room, twin flights descended to a landing, one descending along the wall under my little window, one along the opposite wall, under a window exactly similar; and the broad lower flight, doubling back, descended between. To one ascending the stairway, the two little recessed, column-fronted apertures facing each other above the upper flights, like inaccessible eagles'-nests, were — curious.

But one afternoon when I had wandered aimlessly into the "lilac-room", the unfamiliar guest-room that was opposite my room, I was suddenly confronted by the portal to the world of fiction — which had always, since the beginning of time, been situated in the wall of my own bedroom, portal

now strangely somber but undeniably the same; and I stood staring, with the astonishment a man might experience if the copper beech of his own garden, whose every bough he knows by heart, should appear before him, unmistakable, enigmatic, at the end of a pathway in the forest.

There were also, of course, phenomena that provoked more than puzzlement — elicited a cry. I was terrified when the radiators rattled at night. One night they rattled until I cried in terror for the nurse. And it was Mindra, my grandmother, who heard me. She came in and held my hand, then sat beside me to reassure me until I should fall asleep. There was a gust of wind. Mindra said she was going to fix some curtains that would be blowing, she would be right back. She left the door open so that the light would shine into the room and I should feel safer. That was not so bad. I listened with an almost friendly feeling to the now diminished rattlings, persuaded, for that night at least, that they were not malevolent.

But I began to be impatient that Mindra did not come back. I was no longer frightened; but she had said she would come back, I expected to have her there again. It was clearly out of order. Here was the door open to the electric-lit vastnesses of the rest of the house, and not a sound to be heard. I had a definite idea as to what had happened. Every time she fixed a curtain she saw another somewhere else that needed to be fixed, and so went from curtain to curtain farther and farther away. I had the premonition then that, whatever the reason, she would not come back at all. Bitter child. Not that Mindra seemed in any way to blame. Whatever she did was unquestionable by virtue of herself. What I resented was the circumstance that had taken her away. A curtain blew, Mindra went to fix it, something prevented her returning, and I, deprived of an unusual joy by a chance for which I was not to blame, was left alone, powerless to do anything about it.

When the bull that had snatched away Europa was lost to sight, she with it, far out on the sea, her brothers foreknew for one despairing moment their years of searching, and like as their foreknowledge imprinted indelibly in their memories that last glimpse of their sister vanishing far out on the pale sea, so the moment of loneliness in which I knew that something would prevent her returning to my bedside remained as the most vivid memory of my grandmother in the prime of her beauty.

Did she, actually, forget that she had left me there expecting her with the door ajar? Or did all this my feeling transpire so quickly that it was all over and I already asleep, mistaken, when she came back on time after all?

2

Sleep was transversed by the long lazy sounds of roosters crowing, sound in which drifted pale distances of meadow and quarries still wet, landscape where mythical animals went, dodo and unicorn; sound which then, insistent, awakened me to my room, motes in the sun flooding in under the window-shade, and the other sounds of summer morning, lawn-mowers, liquidity of innumerable birds, footsteps in the house.

First and foremost the primeval world of smells, the smells of soap, bread-and-butter, milk, rooms that had just been cleaned, varnish on banisters, hot grass, grease and gasoline in the garage, the deep clover near the shore, and farther down, on the rocks, the smells of sea-weed, crabs, salt air.

The brown twilight of my room when the shades were drawn down for my nap, with the brown animals on the walls; the pale colors of peach ice-cream, blue silk ties, ladies' motoring-veils; the rose ramblers, the painted sand-buckets and sail-boats, American flags and the flash of tor-

pedoes, the flash of white flannels and white tennis-balls, butterflies, pansies, croquet-balls.

Both the odor and the shade of the wisteria were delicate and magnetic, and the wood the vine grew against seemed soft. I wanted to cut into the wood and get to the core. I made a long deep scar, but was not satisfied.

Everywhere there was something one couldn't get to or couldn't understand. One could never get to the heart of the woods. There were three paths through the woods and they all simply came out on the other side. One was never present on the shore when the surf was pounding its hardest, one could never know the depths of the ponds in the flooded quarries, or understand where the other silent sounds were between the notes of the scale on the piano, or the interminability of the road of cement along the top of the wall.

And always to be wanting something. Wanting to have two spoonfuls of sugar on my cereal because Percival could have two, to eat cantaloupe because I wasn't allowed to, to be all day long with the favourite person, to be looking at the battleships through the big telescope the year the Atlantic Fleet was in the harbor. I wanted my great-grandfather to tell me about the Civil War, but he had nothing to say. I asked, "Did you kill anybody?" He answered, "You couldn't tell. A command was given and a lot of soldiers fired at once. I hope I didn't." I always sympathised with a lost cause, especially those to which the men of my family were opposed. My great-grandfather had fought for the Union, I sided with the Confederacy. My grandfather was interested in the village baseball team, I sided with all the teams that lost to it.

I read a book about a boy who had a Japanese tutor Sato, who taught him how to box, and I wanted the same tutor. Some scouts passed the house with a band playing military music, and I wanted to be a scout. Ashamed to admit it, I lay face down refusing to do anything until my mother

should ask me what the trouble was. Then I said, "I want to be a boy scout." She answered encouragingly, "I'll think it over." I never thought of it again. Those were great sorrows.

There were, at least, moments gazing at the fire in the open fire-place, going to sleep during thunder-showers, long rides in the automobile.

The atmosphere of my childhood motoring was recalled to me years later by a remark my cousin Elfrieda made about the roads near Southampton: "It's just a toss-up whether you find pretty wild-flowers or nice light and shade." There it was. Those were the simple, the primary pleasures of motoring: the wild-flowers and all the other accidental phenomena that "flashed past the window", and as the greatest treat of all, nice light and shade, as in the gray-and-green woods around Meducka Lake. But certain roads one went over so often that their landmarks ceased to be accidental and recurred like the episodes in an epic song: the foundry rushing past with its banging and its odour, the Rockport station with its long porticos, the water-tower, the meadows where the cows had pastured since the beginning of time and beyond which was the end of the world, the long line of the Bass Rocks road crossing the marshes far to the left, Gloucester with its smells of fish, "the elms", Annisquam, the long curves of the sea.

The motor was the best of places for protracted day-dreams. The moving horizon was appropriately vast, and I could sit still and did not have to talk. Whether in the motor, walking, or at play, I was composing long stories, and the hero was usually myself, and they were usually partly in words: "Then Gareth did so-and-so." There were very few games I did not translate to heroic scale. In a game of tag, Ronald and the nurse run from the open lawn toward the apple trees, with me running after them: i.e., the Britons flee into the interior of England, and Julius Caesar pursues them. Before my tenth year every part of the house and

grounds was peopled with scenes from fiction, mythology, and history. It was outside the door of Ronald's room that Athena appeared to the returned Odysseus, and he had descended to the landing to shoot down the suitors in the rooms below, Athena standing behind him, impassive, throughout.

These things happened around me and in me, at the summer home. But of myself, myself in the actuality of doing something, there remain only two moments entirely distinct: Gareth is going up the hill to the bungalow, in a state of great elation, to ask Great Grandpa and Great Grandma to come to dinner, because it is his seventh birthday; Gareth is going slowly slowly down the stairs, he has a horrible pounding headache, he is being hurried upstairs to his room. Two moments of intensity: elation, physical pain.

3

Each autumn I returned to college with inflated projects for the winter, and the room that I was to have was naturally an important condition of the way I pictured to myself my plans. I cannot recall very definitely my projects for Junior year. But I was going to be, as always, phenomenally active, more so than ever before. I was returning from my first trip to Europe. I had stood before the Roman arch at Orange straining every sense to comprehend simultaneously the grandeur of its lines, the weight of its mass on the soil, its momentum in the history of Europe. Had confronted the stained glass at Bourges in exasperation, despair. What mind so acute as to comprehend such intricacy of design, such subtlety of color? I wanted to smash them — and be done with it. If I had been able to sketch I might have been somewhat appeased; but there never would have been enough sketches, they never would have noted enough.

The room I was to have as a Junior was a prospect to whet intentions of activity. A single room, in the first place — a change eagerly welcomed after two years rooming double. Secondly, my new room was situated in a new building that had just been built on the very campus itself. Its centrality was exciting. It was "just a dash" from library, post-office, classrooms, and all the dormitories. The library stood so close that I could clearly see across the intervening grass-plot into the interior of the periodical room. Periodicals on politics, poetry, entomology, archeology, art. . . . Foreign periodicals from all over the world. . . . Ideas! Ideas! Ideas! "Expanding until the sky is the limit." This in view from my window.

Early that autumn I dreamt that I stood under the arch at Orange, trying literally to expand myself into all its lines and crevices, thus to possess it; and the arch with a roar of crumbling stone began to fall, and all the arches of Europe began to move toward Orange, to fall on and crush me beneath them. This dream, like Swann's in the first book of Proust, should have closed an episode.

As soon as I was well installed in my new room, I started sleeping on the floor. I had read in Yeats' Reveries over Youth and Childhood: "After the Wanderings of Oisin, my style seemed too ornate, and I thought for some weeks of sleeping upon a board." I undertook this method of purifying my own style. The first morning brought a discovery: the thrill it was to rise. One simply stood up, after hours of lying flat, and was conscious of one's full height. When I mentioned this experience years later to an older man, he reflected,

"Of course. 'He *rose* from his bed.' The ancient way. To get out of our modern beds, we have to *extricate* ourselves."

In my new room I did accomplish considerable work.

Three times a week after lunch I used to sit there at the pine-wood table "dashing off" — for it had to be finished in forty-five minutes — a short essay on one of the English

poets; and the immediate phenomena, the one great oak standing up out of the grass-plot that lay between me and the library, the changing sky over the library roof, fresh air blowing in at the window, footfalls and voices from the walks below, became a part of the associations that had been formed in my mind around several of the poets. It was a matter of atmosphere rather than of definite images. Wind in the oak, sun on the grass and stone, the drifting changes of sky, phenomena simple and general, the common properties of English poetry.

But the scene when one looked attentively was quite specifically one building, one grass-plot, one tree — all the more specific for its stark simplicity. The visible roots at the base of the tree, in the contorted postures of Lessing's Laocoon, seemed to be struggling for their freedom, against the actuality of the whole.

The roof of the library was of blue-gray slates. Its tint varied slightly with the weather and the time of day, affording a color-contrast to the sky. As people remark the blueness of the sky under an arch or over a temple ruin, fact capitalized by Renaissance painters, so it was the library roof that served me as a point of departure, catching my eye with a contrast and impelling me to look further, to watch the clouds or the tinges of the sunset.

At times, in disconsolate moments, I would catch myself gazing out of the window as if what I wanted lay just beyond it, or away in some other place. "Playing the caged canary," I called it, reminding myself that "life" was not outside the window, it was there, in the room with me, in that with which I wished to cope.

I was reading Jonathan Edwards on the freedom of the will. I knew the passage of Chapman:

> "There is a deep nick in Time's restless wheel
> For each man's good, which when it comes it strikes;
> As rhetoric yet works not persuasion

But only is the means to make it work,
So no man rises by his real merit,
But when it comes cries 'clink' in his raiser's spirit."

On the one hand the lines excused my indolences. (I already knew, though I had not seen the formulation: "sin = arrears of effort".) On the other hand they gave me the courage to try again — since there was nothing to expiate.

4

The streams of the Upper Valley were of endless interest. It was a feature of the high dry climate, that there were no lakes, no ponds. The streams were the only water and they sang the valley's beauty.

The stream at the little tea-house near the highway ran laughing through the grass at one's feet, where one sat at the tea-table under a parasol — as gay as the tea-cups and the panorama. This side of it the spectator, on the other side the scene. The advertisement would run: "The sparkle and gurgle of running water at your feet, and a center box in the theatre of the Scenic West." Or in another age the mandarin's letter: "From this pagoda, two equidistant china-white mountains, and the hillsides reaching heaven."

Some streams were only incidents, like the streams one crossed on the trails.

There were two, those of our own park, brook and river, that I went to deliberately, as one would go to one's desk or one's room. All over the park one could hear, as a faint undertone in the air, the rumor of the river in the distance. If I happened to go far enough into the park, and got close enough to the river, the noise of it drew me towards it, drew me to its edge, and held me there. Or if I went there deliberately and sat beside it, its din held me there. Thought sometimes causes one's eyes to stare fixedly at nothing; and sometimes

one's eyes stare fixedly not because one is thoughtful, but simply because of something magnetic to the muscles of the eyes, and one's stare may then make one thoughtful, that the thoughtfulness may prolong the stare. Likewise it may be that my listening to the overtones of the din of North Fork was what held me there beside it in a sort of trance; or, conversely, I may have been held there merely by the din's magnetic action on certain simple nerves, which then set me listening to the overtones, that I might stay there listening, and prolong the action on the nerves.

The din itself was composed of an infinity of sounds: all the strands of the river so diversely rattling over the rapids, plunging and purling into basins, roaring themselves hoarse in different keys around every one of the innumerable rocks; the snapping of floating sticks; and the separate reverberations of all this through all the woods; all these making one continuous roar, which was the undertone everywhere.

From this, first of all, the forest: in the rapids the intractability of its rocks and brush, in the sticks the crash of falling trees, in the roar the age of the standing timber — "woods decaying, never to be decayed".

In the din there were always voices. The voices of the children of my ninth summer, when North Fork had been the terrible frothy rushing river that could carry one away.

And it always seemed as if some one had just shouted a long way off.

The roar was also, of course, the noise of the river's will. River that rushed past without paying the slightest attention to me. Its knowledge and its vengeances were not my business. The river and the wood were a part of me, of my experience. But I was not a part of the river, only a stranger, an accident, unimportant. Once a horse and rider, dashing on an errand for Multnomah, had slipped on the precarious bridge and fallen. A neigh, a crash, a cry.

But most mysterious of all was the sing of a fine metal ring

that some one was repeatedly striking, somewhere, with a secret meaning.

Other moments were unquestionable also, when the din would hold me merely by muscular hypnosis. For I would find myself stupidly staring at the commonest aspects of the stream, a rock fighting backward against the current — with an action, because of the vibrations, not continuous, but continuously repeated — or I would be staring at nothing and thinking, What was I thinking?

All the way across on the other side of the valley there was a road that turned in to a place where the irrigation stream flowed through the woods as green and silent as a moat. The surface seemed to flow slowly, but we found, when we went swimming there, that the current was very strong. By swimming as hard as we could against the current, we could remain stationary and clamber out at the same place.

One morning when Ronald and I were riding before breakfast and came to the road that turned in to that place, Ronald said he'd lost a pocket-knife, he might have left it on the bank there, he'd ride in and see, he'd catch up with me.

He disappeared in the timber, and my horse jogged on alone.

Suddenly — all my muscles tense — the appalling thought: suppose he should go swimming in that dangerous place, alone. I saw it: carried struggling down stream by opaque green water, no help from deserted woods.

I wheeled, and again, stopped. What had given me the idea he'd go swimming. He'd said he'd be right back. And even if he did go swimming, was it any more likely he'd have a cramp then than when we were swimming there together? If you always ran after such slight possibilities as that, you'd spend your whole life in a frenzy of false alarms.

I turned again, and jogged on, brooding. Such a thing would happen on just such a day — after he had been so gay. "My dear, a terrible thing has happened, a boy was found drowned in the irrigation stream near. . . ."

Should I go back? Or not? I knew it would happen that I would not go back.

Ahead, on a promontory, four gigantic firs, black, stood pointing to the slowly moving clouds.

I had come to the same stream higher up, and paused on the bridge, looking down into the green reptilian water flowing toward . . .

Then there was a clatter of hoofs, as he galloped up and rejoined me.

5

A felicitous symbol of the whole domestic environment was the view in front of the cottages. A band of white lattice-work fence across the foreground, with its filagree of pink and white cosmos, neat as a temperature chart, the frontier of the grounds; and behind it the flourishing orchard, the lava-beds, and the mountain. My mother had created, in a wild and splendid setting, opulence and order: the living room forty feet long and twenty feet wide, with its flat square rugs and standing lamps; hot and cold water running from the same faucet in the bathrooms; the gay one-colored linens; the insistence that one be on time for meals. And there were bath-houses for the swimming-pool, and a garden of hundreds of flowers planted by kinds, in sections, and effective as a whole.

The lawn, seen from the porch, was a green carpet whose expanse always rested the eyes, and from the fence, a green sea, to which the cottages and groves stood out like promontories. All morning I would lie on the lawn, reading, lying on the hot grass, in the sun, with the flowers at close range: in the odour of the heliotrope, or by the California poppies, gold Roman goblets, atmosphere of Catullus; insects, spectacular, visiting the flowers, velvet-black bees in the asters, a dragon-fly hovering stationary over the heliotrope; Van walking toward me all glistening like a dog of tan jade, or his eyes

staring at me out of the grove as from a woodcut; and the lawn's position in the valley, with the evergreen slopes on the west coming down from the national forest, the prairie-colored hills on the east, with the prairies invisible behind them, and time flowing over the valley eastward with the clouds; just across the fence the orchard, associated with other years when I had worked in it, in blossom-time, reading Maeterlinck; and the flash of my mother's red car through the trees.

At night when one looked across the lawn at the cottages in the moonlight, all their details as clear as in a photograph, one seemed to have been transported to the other world of the advertisements, the dream of model cottage and garden; in the distance the "other mountain" rising out of nothing against a diamonded sky; and I could throw myself flat and stare up, as I had placed my cot the year before, "sleeping at night under the open sky" because of Milton's line and watching in waking moments the Big Dipper sliding across the heavens into the trees. Or on starless nights stand on the edge of the lawn: only the lawn going off into the darkness, and the sound of the sprinkler as of the ring on Van's collar if he were running away across an endless lawn.

And when we had withdrawn to the enormous living-room, outside it only blackness, and sat there, the lamps like constellations and the corners lost in shadow, the room "hung suspended". Or there was only the card-table in the void, and four watching the universe.

And?

And the magnificence of that summer, particularly, kept me perpetually on the verge, the verge of a more energetic and more virtuous tomorrow. Alone in the lamp-lit living-room, I dashed my glass of water to the floor, as if my limitations might be broken in the crash, and Tomorrow come at last.

GARETH ENDOR

NIGHT PIECE

AFTER a day of burrowing
among the living world's damp loam
some frail, sweetest imagined thing,
some memory has brought him home.

You will have seen him sit there reading
of Stephen Dedælus and Bloom,
his nerves excited, faintly bleeding,
as the words' ghosts ascend the gloom.

— Consider how the world goes blind
when finally he shuts his book
and gives the woman in his mind
one devastating final look.

Love of the body twists the heart,
the body swells with the soul's smart;
love is at first a summer ache,
but next the members burn with plague.

The web of kisses on the flesh
becomes in time a heavy mesh
that checkers the muscles of the soul
as those hard muscles stretch and roll.

— Hung on the blanket of the air
from firmest chin to faintest hair —
a lifetime in her face he stared,
lost all the moments they had shared.

R. P. Blackmur

LA POINTE CHEGOIMEGON

The Plains of Abraham

1759

THAT September day the English appeared so suddenly that they seemed to have dropped from the sky; appeared, and fired. A warm rain fell now and again upon the troops, and the smoke from the rifles lay in long white streamers, dissipating slowly. The noise of the rifles, reflected from the running water and from the cliffs, was something like thunder, but the rain was too quiet. And running, for the French, had become almost more important than fighting. The head of Montcalm lay upon the breast of Ma-mongazid, the young Ojibway, the dark sorrowful face, with its war paint of vermillion and white, intent above the French face greying rapidly. Presently they took the Marquis to the hospital at St. Charles, where he died. Ma-mongazid with his warriors in thirty bark canoes returned to La Pointe Chegoimegon through the yellowing woods and the increasing storms of autumn. The rule of the French was over, the Province of Michilimackinac had become the Northwest Territory. The Ojibways called the English Saugaunosh, the Dropped-from-the-Clouds, and regretted the French.

La Pointe Che-goi-me-gon

MANIBUSH ran in the woods, sometimes as a rabbit, sometimes as a young Indian. The sand point at Che-goi-me-gon was the remnant of the great beaver dam which he built,

generations ago. The wild rice, the short, blunt ears of maize, the fire, curling in narrow tongues about the birch logs in the center of the wigwam floor, were the gift of Manibozho.[1] Because of him the gull was white, the kingfisher was barred and crested, the woodpecker red-headed, the sap in the maple trees thin, instead of thick, as formerly, the hell-diver a red-eyed bird with crooked legs, the squirrel little, the bear big and eating only berries unless attacked, the bark of the red willow good to smoke. Because of him, likewise, the Mide lodge was built yearly on the shore of the bay St. Charles and ceremonies performed to heal the sick, and even, in the old days, to raise the dead, to enjoy again, in some place far off, their earthly bodies. There was nothing in the woods with which he had not tampered, and the stories told of him were of all varieties, ludicrous, obscene, grave, or sacred. The earth was his grandmother, the west wind his father, the Indians his uncles. The bear, lumbering obscurely through the wet leaves and grasses, was versed in the Mide mysteries, and full of unknown, if beneficent, power. The otter was the first of the Mide initiates; the wolf was the brother of Manibozho and conducted the dead in safety to the Lodge of Reindeer.

In her father's lodge was the Mide pole surmounted by the carved wooden figure of Ko-ko-ko-ho, the Owl, which spun with the wind, and which was never allowed to be seen unless her father was at home. The lodge was narrow but long, "an egg cut in two", an egg sixty feet from end to end and perhaps ten feet wide. It was constructed of cedar poles, thongs and bark, and a tall man could stand upright in it easily. In a row down the center were three or more fires, above which, in the opening of the smoke holes, corn, meat and fish were hung to dry, and skins which had been previously scraped and boiled in a solution of wood ash and animal brain. These

[1] The zh in this word, and in other Ojibway words, is the best English orthography I can devise for the French j, or the s in pleasure. Che-goi-me-gon is purely French orthography, and should be pronounced so.

skins, once tanned, were almost translucent and had a sweet, tarry odor. They were soft, and remained so even after being wet through. The floor of the lodge was earth, trampled and swept, and around the entire wigwam, next the wall, ran a low platform of cedar and balsam boughs covered with skins, furs, or woven cedar mats. A deer skin hung across the entrance.

On the mild spring night after the corn planting, her mother left the lodge, alone, and walked in the soft darkness naked about the borders of the cornfield, trailing after her upon the freshly turned earth her deerskin garment full of fertility. The girl, lying in her place on the balsam boughs near the lodge door, saw her go, stepping quietly through the diminished firelight, and heard her return softly and lie down beside her husband, on the far side of the lodge. The corn had been planted in hills, and in each hill a fish, or part of a fish, had been buried, since life comes from life. As they lay there, all of them, in the fragrance of wood-smoke and evergreen boughs, in the odor of burnt fish and the warm familiar odor of their own bodies, often as not the sharp, light patterings of the spring rain would grow distinct through the noises of the trees and of the lake, and they would fall asleep feeling the powers of earth and air beneficent. After the bitterness of winter it was profoundest happiness.

Her father's first wife slept near the girl on the women's side of the lodge. Her brothers and half-brothers and sisters were there, eight of them in all, and sometimes her grandfather with his two wives, an uncle and a daughter who had married a French-Canadian after the death of her first husband, and been deserted by him. Sometimes there were also guests. Her father was Waub-ojeeg, the White Fisher, hereditary chieftain of the Ojibway nation, her grandfather, Ma-mongazid, the Big Foot, who had fought for Montcalm; she herself was O-zhah-gus-ko-day we-quay, the Woman of the Glade, but her mother called her Nindanis, my daughter,

and her father said, "Equay-zonse, little woman." She was fourteen years of age.

The wigwams about Chegoimegon were all Ojibway now, save for a few visiting Potawatomis, or Ottaway, or Menominee. No man could remember when they had not been Ojibway, and the Sioux had been driven by her father beyond the Mississippi. Lake Superior, and all the surrounding territory was Ojibway, and the center of the Ojibway power was Chegoimegon.

In some remote way her father acknowledged a British jurisdiction over and above the Ojibway. He did not think of the land as being British, but of the Ojibways as being bound by treaty to the English as they were to the Ottawas, Potawatomis, Illinois and Menominees. He expected to punish an Ojibway who transgressed against an Englishman, and he expected the English to do justice for the Ojibways upon French or English. He granted the English the right to trade in his territory; he admitted that the day of the French was over. This man, Waub-ojeeg, had the greatest dislike for all white men, although he tolerated a Frenchman. His father had fought for the French, and had been honored by the English. He had wasted his time and his strength in battles that were not his own, and he had been given whiskey to drink.

After the last desperate effort of Pontiac to maintain the French supremacy in America, which resulted in the massacre of 1763 at Old Fort Mackinac, the French traders were forbidden the Lake Superior territory, and the English traders were afraid to venture among such bitter enemies. Meanwhile the Indians, who had become accustomed to European kettles and guns and blankets, and who had neglected their own industries for hunting and trapping for the sake of possessing these strange and valuable articles, were suffering want. Moreover, once the musket was extensively introduced in the country, the Indian who had to rely upon bow and arrow

was considerably at the disadvantage, and the Iroquois, old enemies of the Ojibways, were well supplied with bullets and powder. Therefore, two years later, Chegoimegon sent Ma-mongazid to Sir William Johnson at Johnson Hall, with peace offerings and the request that a trader might be sent among them soon. The offerings were accepted, Ma-mongazid was treated with great honor, and a silver gorget and a belt of blue and white wampum were bestowed upon him — blue sky, white clouds, fair weather. The trader was promised. But Waub-ojeeg, some eight or ten years later, undid the blue and white belt, shell by shell, and, making it into war messages, sent out his runners to all the Ojibway villages to organize his nation against the Sioux. When the belt was reassembled and returned to the old man many Ojibways were dead, many more Sioux, and the people of the lake villages, for the first time in generations, went about their daily business without fear. Thus did Waub-ojeeg turn his back on the white man and fight the battles of his own people. He had no gifts from either French or English, and he had never tasted whiskey.

Father Allouez had been at Chegoimegon in 1665, the first priest, and almost the first white man, to visit the place. He had found there a village of eight different nations, chief among them the Ottawas and Hurons, and he had built there a small chapel of bark. He named the lake, Lac du Tracy, in honor of the then Governor of New France, and the islands about the Red Cliff Point the Apostle Islands. Bay St. Charles he had named, and Isle St. Michel, and Chegoimegon itself, the Sandy Lowland, he had named La Pointe du St. Esprit. It was now called by the French La Pointe Chegoimegon, or simply La Pointe. He was the first man to write down the word, inscribing it with his square-tipped quill Chagouoimegong. He said, "They are here to the number of eight hundred men bearing arms," and again, "they are licentious and superstitious. I have thought fit to baptize only

the children and the dying." Neither the Devil nor the Ottawas had desired the presence of this priest at Chegoimegon. The Devil caused his box of medicines and letters, his precious theriacs compounded of opium and sweet spices, cardamon, cinnamon, mace, to be left behind at a portage; the Ottawas, finding it, plundered it, left it open to the rain, and, finally, fearful of the white devils in it, brought what was left of it to its owner. While the priest implored St. Anthony for the sake of his box, Shingwauk, the Pine, in the next shelter, made a prayer and offerings to the Bear to soften the obstinate temper of this white man's mind, and make him wish to return to Montreal, that he might not be a burden on the Ottawas forever. The Devil caused the priest's canoe to be wrecked; the Ottawas thereafter, not unreasonably, took him into their canoes under the condition that he should also paddle. Asceticism and contemplation had not prepared him for this trial, and day after day he suffered torture at this humble occupation, many times continuing in an actual physical daze, many times fainting under his load at the portages. Even so, in passing up a river which united two great lakes and ended in a rapids two and half leagues in length, he lifted his eyes to the islands, the wooded shores and trim bays, and said, touched by their beauty, "So God gives us always some little grace to sweeten our days."

This patient man continued with the Ottawas for two years; then, returning to Quebec for help, stayed there but two days before embarking again for La Pointe. He labored that winter among the Hurons at Red Cliff, witnessed their sacred dances, was abused, converted a few savages, preached the gospel to those who would listen and to those who would not listen, and at last, after one more winter, re-embarked for Quebec, never to return. He took with him two Iroquois whom he had ransomed. He stepped into the canoe barefooted, in order not to damage with his heavy French shoes the fragile floor; he was bareheaded in order that the brim

of his hat might not inconvenience the Ottawa paddlers; his black skirts were gathered up, not to carry sand into the craft. Blanket he had none; it had been stolen from him long before. The holy pyx he carried in his arms, and letters for his superior at *Kebec*. So, after four years of semi-starvation, of a diet of *tripe de rocher*, that small, shell-shaped fungus, often covered with cobwebs and spiders, of which the Indians made a thin black soup, of powdered fish bones, and spoiled corn, after four years of hardships encountered day and night, and unremitting labor and gentleness, he departed, and in the year 1791, the Woman of the Glade woke at night and heard the rain falling upon the bark roof and upon the new corn, and not even the oldest man in the Ojibway tribe, who kept the records, incised on birchbark or on native copper, who renewed them every ten years and buried them, wrapped in bird down and soft skins, in a secret place, had ever heard of Father Claude Allouez or of his chapel.

In the late summer Chegoimegon was filled with visitors come to observe or to participate in the Mide ceremonies. Runners were sent out weeks beforehand, with bundles of painted sticks, and presently many light shelters sprang up along the shore of bay St. Charles, built of saplings thrust into the ground in a circle, the ends tied together at the top and the framework covered with rush or cedar mats, or with pieces of bark. Walking between the tall leafy clusters of corn stalks the girl who was known as the Woman of the Glade heard the sound of the Mide drum and the voices from the great Mide shelter in the center of the village. The corn was ripe for eating but not for harvesting. She broke the green ears from the stalks, the leaves rustling heavily and crisply about her, and dropped them on her outspread blanket, and the beat of the Mide drum, small, remote, powerful, traversed the wall of leaves, entered the wood and the cornfield, spread outward upon the water of the bay and became a part of the weather and the still sunshine. She gathered the ends of the

blanket together, and swinging the bundle over her shoulder came from the cornfield by the trail through the aspen wood to the village. The ground was soft, it sprang under her feet a little at each step. Through her moccasins she felt the texture of it, twig and leaf and moss, and the thin moccasins, in summer, lasted a long time upon this gentle earth; it was the ice of winter that cut them. She wore leggins of red cloth, and a short-sleeved buckskin tunic, and a buckskin skirt reaching to her knees and fringed about the bottom. Her hair was in two braids, but she wore no feather in her hair because a feather meant an enemy either killed or wounded, according to the way in which it was stripped or decorated. She came from the aspens at early dusk, and saw beyond the wigwams and the people, the quiet shore of the bay and the far-away shape of La Pointe, and, beyond it, Isle St. Michel, all wooded shapes.

People were making their fires, many of them out of doors. She passed near the high green lattice wall of the Mide lodge. A group of Ottawas with bundles of things to trade were waiting for the ceremonies to be over. An Ottawa woman seated on the ground, her feet drawn up to one side of her, half-kneeling, was nursing a baby bound to a cedar frame. The men, crouching on the balls of their feet, their buttocks on their heels, were smoking. The bowls of the long pipes rested on their knees. She knew they were Ottawas because of their curious, clipped speech. The drumming and the singing from the Mide lodge was loud and distinct. "Into thy body I shoot the spirit. Into thy body. How beautiful it is, our Mide shell. Drifting snow, it is the drifting snow is why I sing." Anyone might hear it because, unless one had been instructed, no one might understand it. People were standing at the entrance, looking in, and her oldest brother was there, wandering about with an apparent aimlessness. He had been stationed as a guard to make sure that no careless Ottawa constructed a lodge between the Mide wigwam and the small,

dome-shaped sudatory lodge opposite its eastern entrance. "It is the drifting snow is why I sing." She went on to her father's lodge.

That evening the Mide priests came to call upon her father. He was dressed in white buckskin, with fringes over his shoulders and down the outside of his arm, and down the outer seam of the leggins which reached from his thighs to his ankles. Diagonally across his breast and shoulders were hung two beaded belts, which crossed each other, and from these hung his Mide bag of otter skin and his embroidered tobacco pouch. He sat cross-legged on the platform beyond the fire. His face was painted red with a narrow green stripe running from the base of the right ear across the cheek and nose to the left forehead. His pipe, beautifully decorated with the red scalps of woodpeckers and green and burnished feathers of the hummingbird, lay across his knees.

The great Mide assembly had begun to disperse the morning after the final ceremonies. All day long, canoes were moving off into the lake, wigwams being dismantled, pitch being heated to mend canoes. The ashes of the fires, the stakes from which the kettles had been hung, the trampled grass, a few bones that the dogs had not devoured, were left, and the sixty or more wigwams of the regular village. Soon even these began to disappear. Early in September her grandfather and his family left to gather wild rice, ascending the Mauvaise with many portages. The Woman of the Glade was very busy husking and parching corn, and storing it in big birchbark hampers. The openings in the woods were full of goldenrod; going to the river for water one early morning she broke the first skim of ice. Maples were turning scarlet over night, and the wind, blowing from the north, was sharp and breath-taking. She liked to go inland a little way and lie in the deep grass like the deer, sunning herself, out of the confusion and vigor of the weather. Before the month was over her people too were dismantling their lodge,

taking it apart, piece by piece, and packing it, with other possessions, in the canoes. Some of the poles they left behind them, hidden in a safe place. On the morning of the twentieth they left Chegoimegon and went north, rounding the Red Cliff peninsula, and coasting the shore until they came to the Wisakoda, or Burntwood River. This they mounted, and went inland until they reached good beaver country, and before snow fell three smaller lodges were erected from the stuff of the large one. Waub-ojeeg and Way-ish-kee, the First Born, were setting their traps. The solitary life of the winter months had begun.

At night, after a day among the traps, the men returned to the lodges, told the women how much game there was and where to find it, and the women went after it to bring it home. While the women were gone the men ate the food which had been prepared for them, and rested. Some meat was smoked, some dried and pounded into short fibres, and mixed with bear grease, as pemmican. In November, while the ground was yet clear of snow, Way-ish-kee took his sister on a deer hunt. When they came to the deer-run, and the Indian was satisfied that the tracks were fresh, he knelt and dropped into one print a small quantity of powdered vermillion and tobacco. He then drew the outline of a deer upon the ground, and, marking the heart with a pointed stick, dropped there also a pinch of vermillion. Having thus assured himself that the quarry would grow faint and wait for him, he nodded to his sister, and they went forward softly. They came to a good ambush among low cedars, where the trail ran into a glade, and waited there, and when the deer came, a yearling buck, stepping delicately through the long, seeded grass, it was the girl who pulled Way-ish-kee's bow and sent an arrow into its side behind the shoulder. Way-ish-kee said, "Very good. Now you can marry. If your husband won't hunt, still, you won't be hungry." He cut up the animal and put the pieces in the skin, and his sister carried it home.

Waub-ojeeg was a good hunter. His children could not remember a winter when there had not been plenty of meat in the lodge, although other families often suffered. At the end of the season he had usually four packs of furs to trade at the Sault Ste Marie for powder and bullets, traps, kettles, calico and tobacco. Each bundle was valued at forty pounds sterling, and although the trader, having a monopoly of the market, charged extravagant prices for his goods, one hundred and sixty English pounds bought a great deal. For food and raiment, lodging and transportation, Waub-ojeeg paid nothing. His women were industrious and strong, and his family lived well. He had, moreover, a virtue which few white men shared with him. He knew when he had enough.

Winter was the season for story-telling. At night, the animals hidden away in thickets, in hollow trees, in holes in the earth, the birds gone south, the chickadee ruffled into a ball, asleep with his head under his wing, the plants covered with snow, the fish locked under ice, the little flies and insects gone no one knew where, this animistic universe was earless, and it was safe to gossip. In the winter the endless stories of Manibozho were repeated, together with stories of the warpath, all the legendary history of the tribe. The dance drum, larger than the Mide drum but with a softer beat, was taken to the fire and tuned by warming it, and Way-ish-kee and his father took turns at singing, accompanying the song with a light throbbing of the drum. Snow fell upon the snow. Bare branches rubbed together, creaking in the wind as on the day when Manibozho lost his moose; ice and snow broke from the trees and fell upon the lodge, and slid to the snow-covered ground with a light scraping, and O-zhah-gus-ko-day we-quay swept the ashes into the edge of the fire with a balsam branch. The noise of the wind was soft and lonely.

JANET LEWIS

ART CHRONICLE

All on the Shoulders of Two

NO one any longer gets angry about the Impressionists,[1] not even, I am told, in Boston. The dust of battle settled years ago and they have entered into history like the Italian Renaissance or any other period. Even their successors, the still sometimes discussed "moderns" like Derain and Matisse are being shipped out of 57th Street for dumping on Hollywood, Palm Beach and other hick towns. All this means two things for the Impressionists: — we can begin to see them, and fewer people will try to.

Contemporaries are fun to talk about, but we can no more judge them than we can judge ourselves. Somebody (I think Ste. Beuve) once said that the criticism of contemporaries was mere conversation. But now that the Impressionists have become our ancestors, they begin to rank themselves into a hierarchy.

It must be admitted that many people got interested in the Impressionists, and in "modern art," simply because Vollard made a lot of money on Cézanne. These people thought they could do the same for the "moderns," and the few who sold out before the "modern art" market started to break, really did make some money. I doubt if these people realize that all the while Vollard was laying in Cézannes, he was also buying up a host of other painters who are today worthless.

[1] I hope that custom and convenience may excuse my using the silly trade mark *Impressionists* for painters so diverse.

(Not, of course, that the market price of a work of art ever had much to do with its artistic value. No one could think *that* after a stroll along 57th Street.)

The real pity is this, that Vollard's ballyhoo has made "modern art" a duty.

The dust of history is settling on the Impressionists in layers of varying thickness. Monet, for instance, has ceased to glimmer through it; and it has smothered all of Gauguin except a few outlines of decoration. But then Gauguin was really never a painter at all, but a maker of Rousseauist idylls. Most of Manet begins to look as slap-dash as Harrison Fisher or Toulouse-Lautrec and what little is worth saving is as dull as an OLD master. Although the Douanier Rousseau is always to be treasured for his gusto, even his best friends treat him as a special case and protect him from comparison with real painters. The dealers lately shook the dust off Seurat and laid him on their counters, where some people bought because the things were rare and expensive. But an architect's renderings, whatever their price, are pretty barren.

Van Gogh's hash is harder to settle. I suspect any painter who can be so successfully and prolifically faked, for you cannot fake the really great things. Also Van Gogh's work carries with it an alloy of personal impurities, like his preaching and his difficulties with money and friends. This rank dose of "personality" may be what makes Van Gogh jump and knock your wind out, the way Dostoyevsky does. But when you have picked yourself up, you begin to think it was no such thing, after all. It takes something like Cézanne's steady determination to roll out a really new road.

A good many Renoirs will probably stay, even after his whole work has been sorted over to throw out the candy box covers. Although Renoir was too readily pleased to have good taste, his very readiness for pleasure is what will keep some of his works forever fresh.

Cézanne seems to be the only nineteenth century painter who still has a surprise reserved for the day when we shall be ready to see it. Because he is as durable as a Romanesque church, I suppose he could hardly help becoming the academy for his successors, but it is a pity, for schoolmasters are bowed to with bitterness, just as Bach is by most musicians.

Degas has been slower than Cézanne to take his place, but his drawing is at last putting him beside Tintoretto and the athletic

Venetians. Every year makes Degas look more classic, classic in the way the early Greeks were classic, in being able to read the eternal pattern implied in any passing gesture. No matter how often Degas looked at ballet dancers, at each look he wiped his eye clean. His austerity in starting each new picture from nothing saves him from being caught in a routine of surprise. Each of his pictures is prepared from ambush and then sprung like a murder. Murders can never lose our interest. His scrutiny hurts because he was determined to gloss over none of the banality of the life about him, and determined to track down beauty through no other life. Degas set out to build an abstract world of arrested motion out of elements taken from the world about him. Though this world of arrested motion is as intellectual as that of any painter of 1920–25, his truthfulness forbade his distorting the least everyday significance of the elements he took from the world about him. Nothing would satisfy him short of loyalty to *both* worlds. His own world is as ideal as Delacroix's but he would not allow himself to compose it out of antique (and hence no longer truthful) fragments. He was as fastidious as Delacroix, but bound himself to an even more exacting loyalty. This probably explains why he started out with Delacroix subjects (Semiramis, the Siege of Orleans, etc.) and then had to abandon them.

It is high time that Degas and Cézanne unshouldered the burden of carrying their contemporaries.

A. Hyatt Mayor

ARCHITECTURE CHRONICLE

Berlin: Paris: 1931

The most important architectural event of the current summer was the Berlin Bauausstellung. This exposition of city-planning, architecture, furniture and related technical matters, unfortunately, closed the second of August before many Americans travelling in Europe had reached Berlin. It was, however, visited by enormous numbers of Germans as well as by foreigners, and provided an impressive presentation of the current practice of building throughout the world. It was in this sense a great success, although those who have followed closely the development of architectural technique and of architectural style in the last decade were somewhat disappointed in it. For there was in the exposition little that was strictly new and much that was very definitely second-rate. Except for Halle II, which was alone devoted to architecture as an art, the exhibits suffered from the very German thoroughness with which every facet of the complex problems of building were covered. So many graphs, so many posters, so many plans, so many photographs were confusing and indigestible. Thus in Halle I devoted chiefly to city-planning throughout the world one was most struck by occasional single exhibits: the Swiss traffic graphs, the translucent plan of Paris, or the appallingly bad kitchen shown by the Brooklyn Gas Company. Only on a second or third visit did one observe the extraordinary fact that Spain, Poland and Jugoslavia

had more in the way of good modern architecture than large countries such as France, England and the United States. In the German section certain contrasts of prewar and postwar post-boxes and kiosks made more significant an impression than all the projects for the reconstruction of the Alexanderplatz. The extraordinary good taste of the Danish exhibit with fine photographs well mounted, and well labelled, in the end stood out more in one's memory than room after room of statistics on German cities presented with all the graphical devices of modern advertising.

The farm and country buildings exhibited outdoors were for the most part very bad, lacking both the conscious simplicity of good modern industrial building and the sound traditions of peasant building. Around the edge of the outdoor exhibits in Poelzig's excellent gallery were to be found everything from garage doors to pressure cookers in all the confusion of a Country Fair. In the center there was, however, an oasis of architecture: Professor Peter Behrens' pavilion for the Ring der Frauen, where, incidentally, the only good food in the exposition was to be had. Behrens was before the War the master of most of the young European architects of today. Here in this pavilion he showed himself their pupil. The smooth surfaces of white glazed tile and plaster, the great windows with delicate metal frames, the clarity of the whole design all indicate Behrens' desire to work in the new international style which dominates throughout the exposition. Only in the fantasy of the whole scheme, built up in plan out of intersecting circles is the decorative feeling of the prewar half-modern style continued. Unfortunately Behrens' new constructions in the Alexanderplatz remain as ponderous if not as gloomy as the work of Hans Poelzig. Despite the domination of the new style in the exposition, it must be admitted that most current building in Berlin itself is quite as retardative as in Paris where the Colonial Exposition shows no advance whatsoever over the decorative forms used in the Exposition of 1925 and the new buildings on the boulevards ape the Kurfürstendamm.

The chief interest of the Bauausstellung lay in Halle II which was entirely arranged under the direction of Miës van der Rohe. From the exhibits of marbles, woods and textiles all selected by Miës and installed by Lilly Reich to Miës' one-story country house in the center of the floor, everything here displayed the serene order that can only be achieved by the control of a single positive taste.

Miës' house is very similar to the German pavilion at the

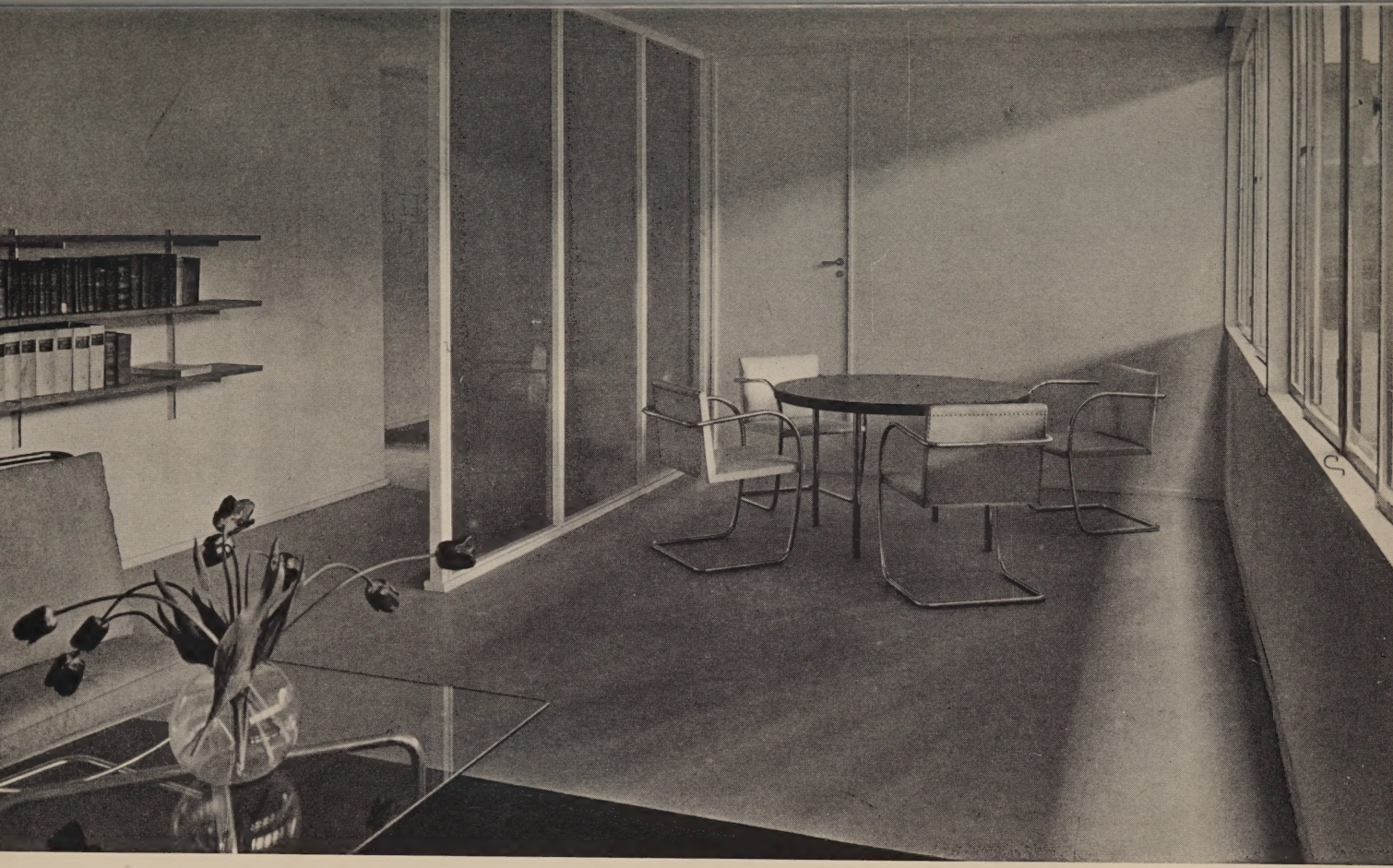
Barcelona Exposition of 1929. It has a slab roof supported in chrome-covered posts, while the walls are all non-supporting screens extending in many cases out into the garden. Some of these screen walls are of fine wood, and many are entirely of plate glass set in metal frames. Only a few are of plaster. The furniture throughout the house is by Miës, and the fine metal forms and rich upholstery materials combine magnificently with the background of fine wood and plate glass.

Of less interest are the other houses in which the problem of the minimal dwelling has been studied by Häring, Haesler, and other architects. Gropius' common rooms for a bachelors' apartment house are similar to those he exhibited at the Grand Palais in Paris last year. Breuer's sportsman's house is also very similar to his work shown in Paris. Miës himself exhibited a one-room apartment of great ingenuity and with the effect he usually achieves of richness and serenity. Jan Ruhtenberg displayed a small apartment much in the spirit of Miës, but somewhat less expensive in execution. Albers offered a living-room with furniture all in wood, an interesting indication that even in furniture the possibilities of traditional materials have not been entirely explored. The character of this room, moreover, was highly individual and dependent neither on the particular "functional" manner of Gropius and Breuer nor on the more expensive "post functional" manner of Miës van der Rohe.

It is worth remarking that these two manners of the new international style dominate so completely throughout the Exposition that one can only find traces of the half-modern style of before-the-War or of the Expressionism of ten years ago. As to traditional forms they hardly appear even in the Italian, English and American exhibits, — in everyway architecturally the most disappointing in the Bauausstellung. As the Stockholm Exposition showed last summer, it is now possible to arrive again at a harmony of architectural character such as has hardly been known since the eighteenth century. Needless to say, this does not mean that an architectural millennium is at hand. The proportion of dull and bad work is almost as high as in the Architectural League Show in New York, and the work by Miës van der Rohe stands out like that of Schinkel in old Berlin.

In a wing of the Kronprinzen Palais a Schinkel Museum has just been opened in which may be studied not only many of his finest unexecuted projects but also his paintings. Surprisingly enough the

IES VAN DER ROHE. DINING-ROOM AND LIVING-ROOM IN THE ONE-STOREY HOUSE AT THE BAUAUSSTELLUNG, BERLIN 1931



JAN RUHTENBERG. LIVING-ROOM AND DINING-ROOM AT THE BAUAUSSTELLUNG, BERLIN 1931

SCHINKEL. WATERCOLOUR OF PROJECT FOR PALACE OF ORIANDA IN THE CRIMEA.

LE CORBUSIER AND PIERRE JEANNERET. HOUSE FOR MADAME DE MANDROT AT LE PRADET, VAR. DÉPARTEMENT

finest of these vie with the work of Caspar David Friedrich, the greatest of German Romantic landscape painters. The opening of this museum serves to recall that not the beginning of the twentieth century but the beginning of the nineteenth century was Berlin's most brilliant artistic period and to turn attention from the cheap and aggressive modern skyscrapers of Bruno Paul and Emil Fahrenkamp to the fine works of Schinkel which are to be found all over Berlin. Two of the least known, the Exerzierhaus in the Karlstrasse and the Neues Tor, both to the north of the Friedrichstrasse Bahnhof may be particularly mentioned here as almost unknown examples respectively of his classical and of his mediaeval manners.

In Paris two new works by Le Corbusier are under construction which promise to be among his finest, a penthouse on the Champs Elysees and a building for the Salvation Army behind the Gare d'Austerlitz. His house for Madame de Mondrot at Le Pradet near Toulon is one of his least expected works. The concrete slab roof is supported by sections of rubble wall which alternate with non-supporting screens of glass. The house lies in the scenery which Cézanne painted and preserves for all its contemporaneity an extraordinary feeling of the Mediterranean tradition.

As to the question "What would a surréaliste architecture be?"; — it is now possible to answer, "It has already been." For Salvador Dali's book "La Femme Invisible" contains photographs of houses built in Barcelona around 1900 by followers of Gaudi. Furthermore, the Vicomte de Noailles has designed with the assistance of Dali, Bérard and Giacometti a house, not yet executed, which is also more or less a revival of the Catalan Art Nouveau. Noailles, however, considers Miës van der Rohe the leading contemporary architect, and surréalisme should hardly be the threat to the continuous development of a modern architectural style that Expressionism was in its day. The revival of 1900 should at last end all revivals.

HENRY-RUSSELL HITCHCOCK, JR.

MUSIC CHRONICLE

New Music in Europe

Late spring and early summer in Europe usually inspires an efflorescence of modern musical compositions. If quantity is considered, this year has certainly been no exception. From one end of Europe to another, new music was so fertile that it was almost impossible to remain in contact with all of it. But the quality of this new music was, unfortunately, for the most part disheartening. Those of us who eagerly followed last year the latest compositions of the modern composers suspected oncoming stagnancy; this year has merely strengthened our suspicions. For though last year we had a "Christophe Colombe" of Milhaud, and a "Leben des Orestes" of Krenek to suggest that the young composers were groping in the right direction, there has been this year almost no intermission from mediocrity. Modern music revealed itself in a lamentable attitude.

There was, for example, the Modern Music Festival which, this year, took place in England. This festival which perennially has served the all-important mission of revealing to us the direction towards which modern music is tending and the phases through which it is passing has, time and again in the past, given performance to music of character, originality, and importance. But the past two years have been discouraging. Last year, at Liège, we heard an endless parade of shallow music. Our modern composers were imitating the classicists blindly, and their music proved to be, almost without exception, stilted and ineffective. This year the results were hardly more encouraging. The locale of the Festival may have changed from Belgium to England, but the music, unfortunately, remained bloodless and anemic.

One would expect that a festival which boasted of the music of Vaughan Williams, Karol Szymanowski, Paul Hindemith, Egon Wellesz, Eugene Goossens would have its moments of interest and, perhaps, of importance. However, the names of the composers proved to be far more formidable than their music. Vaughan Williams' "Benedicte" for chorus and orchestra lacks emotional intensity; it is pallid, colorless music without heart or feeling. Paul Hindemith has turned from cacophony and sharp-pointed

atonality to the penning of saccharine nursery music for children. The result is pathetic. "Wie Bauen Eine Stadt" is hardly anything more than musical doggerel. Albert Roussel's "Psalm" for chorus, and Eugene Goossens' sonata for violin and piano are both fruits of a classicism which is stiff and formulistic. One is tempted to suspect the sincerity of the composers. And even Szymanowski — whose "Stabat Mater" was the only redeeming feature, last year, of a drab festival — has turned to penning obvious music. The pattern of "Chansons Polonaises" is so apparent that one can readily perceive the entire concept of the music after having heard the opening bars.

Has this Festival served to reveal some sad truths about the health and character of modern music?

America was represented at the Festival by a short, but not ineffective, piano sonata of Roger Sessions — not music of great import, to be sure, but pleasing music because of the good taste with which it had been penned — and by George Gershwin's "An American in Paris." One deeply regrets the choice of Mr. Gershwin's composition for the Festival. Mr. Gershwin, in all of his serious music, too often lacks depth, maturity, artistic polish; too often is his hurriedly composed music. And "An American in Paris" by no means sounds his strongest accents. Technically, it is the weakest of all his larger works: the development of his themes, the orchestration, the harmonic garb in which his melodies are dressed, all reveal the blundering hand of an amateur. "An American in Paris," moreover, is not half so witty as its composer had intended it to be. The "walking-theme," with which the composition opens, is trite music; the humor of the French automobile horns misses aim entirely, and becomes merely raucous music. And the best passage in the entire work — the "blues" section — is obviously a stereotyped product of Tin Pan Alley's factory. To have selected Mr. Gershwin's work as representing the best music of our American composers is to give Europe an altogether distorted conception of our musical achievements. One can mention offhand at least a dozen American composers who are far more deserving of representation at the Modern Music Festival than Mr. Gershwin.

Among the new operas, which sprouted throughout Germany with a rich fecundity which would tend to suggest that modern music is in flower rather than in decay, only a negligible few were of interest. Generally, the new operas on view were characterized

by a pusillanimous attempt on the part of their composers to walk in the familiar footsteps of the classicists. The vigorous language of a former day has softened; the rich blood, which formerly flowed in all the music of the younger men, has suddenly become anemic. One would imagine, for example, that so staunch a disciple of Arnold Schönberg as Egon Wellesz would not speak in stilted accents. And yet, in "Der Bacchantinnen" Egon Wellesz has attempted, stumblingly, to reproduce something of the grandeur of Handel, something of the pure and chaste beauty of Gluck. He succeeded, however, only in composing an opera which is painfully dull, whose music progresses with heavy feet lacking all authenticity and conviction. The music is formulistic, without life or feeling, all too obviously the product of a composer who creates his music with his mind rather than with his heart. Or else one might point to Jaromir Weinberger's "The Beloved Voice," in which the meek return to classicism assumed the form of an Oriental drama with Oriental music. Avoiding the idiom which gave genuine freshness and power to "Schwanda," Weinberger has turned to writing a lyrical music which has neither originality nor effectiveness. This "Oriental" music is not only superficial and trite in its pathetic and futile attempt to reproduce an exotic musical idiom, but it is also mercilessly prolix. There are here endless pages of mere wind, endless pages of shallow musical ideas. Can it be that this same pen was only yesterday capable of creating the moving force and the tenderness of "Schwanda"?

It is not necessary to speak of all these new operas which have had initial performances this season. The greatest majority of them were characterized by the same ineffectual music, by the same complete lack of an original viewpoint which marked Weinberger's and Wellesz's latest creations. Only two operas, as a matter of fact, were of sufficient originality to single themselves out of this boring company of mediocrities. The first of these — important not as a great musical achievement but rather as a rich experiment in an interesting direction — was Alois Haba's "The Mother." One can immediately dismiss the artistic importance of this work ; its significance, all too obviously, is only ephemeral. But it did speak in a new musical language, and it did suggest new limitless possibilities not only for operatic music but for all music in general. Therein, for the most part, lay its strength.

Quarter-tone music is certainly no radical innovation at this date. We have already learned of all its rich possibilities: it has

introduced an altogether new vocabulary in our musical speech. Quarter-tone music is capable of an altogether new tenderness, an altogether new power, an altogether new type of haunting beauty; it possesses an expressive eloquence uniquely its own. Several original compositions for quarter-tone piano have already taught this to us. Now we have "The Mother" — the first quarter-tone opera — to assure us of this still more emphatically.

There is no necessity in discussing the opera's many weaknesses. It is apparently no attempt at a unified artistic creation, but is rather a groping experiment in one direction. The orchestra consisted of specially constructed instruments, capable of performing this new type of music. And, since after all these centuries of the diatonic scale it is so difficult for the human voice to adapt itself to quarter tones, it is this orchestra which bears the burden of the music. Much of the music is quite meaningless — endless stretches of unrelated sounds which, as yet, convey to us no impressions whatsoever. But there are moments when the real import of the new music struck us with a colossal force. One of such moments was the scene when the peasant woman is overwhelmed by mental conflicts — a scene which is reproduced in the music with a gruesome but dramatic vividness which our older scale is altogether incapable of expressing. Another such moment was in the opening of the second act, a moment of such novel and fragile beauty that we realized that there must be infinitely more beauty in sound than is at present expressed in our musical systems.

A modern morality play by the Italian composer, Malipiero, "Torneo Notturno" — a "comedy of death" the composer called it — was the second of the two outstanding new operas which were on view this season. Despite the fact that the opera was weighed down by an awkward and stilted libretto, its music was so genuinely moving that the many shortcomings of the book were soon forgotten. "Torneo Notturno" never lapses into cheapness, nor ever echoes others' voices; it is always on a high plane of beauty. Sharp-pointed cacophonies give the music a colossal dramatic force; few scenes in contemporary opera are so stirringly effective as that triumphant moment when Light-Heart defeats Despair. But Malipiero's pen has unfailingly good taste and variety. His music, therefore, now passionate and full of energy, more than once assumes the transparent guise of sheer loveliness. And more than once it assured us that if modern music is in a stagnancy at least all hope is not dead.

DAVID EWEN

FILM CHRONICLE

Animated Cartoons

THE spontaneous manner in which *Krazy Kat* once crossed a chasm by catching hold of a question mark visible in midair before his eyes, marks as distinct a movie manner as the earlier Mack Sennett comedies or the antics of the Keystone Kops. The ridiculousness of animals suggesting the conduct of humans was, long before the movies, an obvious means of getting laughter, pointing a moral or telling a story; but the animated cartoon introduced a new element into the old method. By the addition of movement and the multiplication of scenes, the possibilities for comic fantasy were enormously increased. Then, with the introduction of sound and music to accompany and point up the movements of the characters in a scene, the rhythm of the fantasy could be stabilized and emphasized; even stylized to the point where Madame Lopokova's recent back-handed compliment to the American dance, in which she pronounced *Mickey Mouse* "America's greatest dancer," has considerable meaning.

The antics of *Mickey Mouse* very definitely resemble the movements of a ballet dancer: each movement is calculated, each movement has a definite point and each movement is rhythmical and positive. This, at least, is the resultant economy seen in a cartoon. The reason for the economy derives from a method far removed from that of the ballet, in a medium essentially static, in contrast to the movement of the ballet. The method by which every cartoon is constructed sufficiently indicates the medium. A brief *Mickey Mouse* film is made up of a series of drawings and tracings, of "cells," and each cell contains a variation, sometimes only a minute variation, on the preceding drawing or cell. These cells, without the transforming agency of the camera, would be nothing in the world but a lengthy comic strip with all the transitional movements depicted. It is directly from the comic strip that the animated cartoon derives its economy, as well as its slapstick and even some of its peculiar fantasy. The fundamental likeness between a comic

strip and animated cartoons would be apparent if, for example, Rube Goldberg's "Inventions" were filmed as cartoons. And certainly such a series, for a few times anyway, ought to be highly amusing. What the animated cartoon has that the comic strip of Goldberg and Herriman has not, is variety, movement, rhythm and completeness.

The rich humor that *Mickey Mouse* and his confrères, *Bimbo*, *Krazy Kat* and the others, indulge in has the same source as the comic strip's, in a logical ridiculousness; but the distinct humor of the animated cartoon can be presented only by the movies. For its effectiveness, motion and change are necessary, even occasional exact repetition that only the camera can perform. Certain kinds of American humor, like that of Donald Ogden Stewart, correspond, in general method, to the humor of the cartoon. Stewart and other writers like him develop a humorous point not by the addition of other humorous ideas but by expanding and distorting the humorous point to its farthest logical absurdity. But no one can elongate a dachshund in prose, or tickle a fireman with flames. No comic strip artist can startle a tree into scared life by a thunder storm. Only the camera can enrich and amplify a fantastic idea until all the possible humor is exhausted from it.

There is a further enrichment in the animated cartoons that seems not to be found in any other place: their humor tends to the frankly bawdy. Not so long ago the coy rhythms of *Carolyn Cow* troubled the censors. Still, in spite of the censors, the umbilical emphasis in the clogging that so perpetually occurs in the cartoons, continues, and villainous animals' pants, in full view of the public, are taken down and the exposed area spanked by an angry populace of flames. It is, undoubtedly, these irate flames, and startled trees, heart-broken hydrants, dancing piano stools, helpful pianos and all their perversities, reluctances and contributions that make the cartoons the hilarious fantasies they are.

It seems a shame, then, that all the cartoons are becoming alike, that the variation among the different series is so slight. In a way, it was bound to happen; the immediate possibilities of sound and music were so quickly explored, once they were added to the cartoons (and resulted in two fine *Silly Symphonies*, *Spring* and *The Skeleton Dance*) that further experiment and manipulation seem unnecessary. The very stylization, perhaps the almost faultless rhythm, that gave the cartoons their character was certain to give rise to a formula which afforded easy repetition for mass

production. It is even possible that visualized fantasy has such definite limitations, that once a formula which gives the occasional illusion of variety has been arrived at, there is no more to be done. No one of the elements that go to make up the cartoon — sounds, music, characters, gestures, gags — can be altered separately without altering the whole thing. And the range of sounds in a cartoon is probably limited to the tinkling of bells, the clatter of bones, the screams of a whistle, etc. True, combinations of images and sounds might be worked out in a manner which hasn't been tried before; but here too the range will be fairly quickly exhausted. The main use of music appears to be to accompany singing and dancing and to maintain or emphasize the rhythm of the piece. The gags, of course, depend upon the ingenuity of the makers. Men like Goldberg and Small (who draws *Salesman Sam*) would undoubtedly have something to contribute. There is one possibility which Disney and the other artists have not made all they could out of. The inanimate objects which now play a subordinate rôle in the cartoons could be elevated to stellar parts. The abduction of a steam engine by a water tank, or the adventures of a no-account ash-can might make an amusing series of cartoons, provided their makers did not commit the error of giving the characters voices and lines to speak. If the characters in animated cartoons must speak, the sexless tones of *Mickey* and *Minnie Mouse* appear to be about the best solution.

Whatever does happen to the cartoons will have to happen within them. There is no outside help at all to be had, unless from some of the better comic strip artists. The cartoons are a tight, difficult medium; nothing quite like them exists even in the movies. If they were like any other single medium certain influences would be sure to have an effect upon them. The problems of variety and development that they present, however, are the result of synthesis and combination and they must be solved as if they were the result of a unique medium.

It seems unlikely, too, that the cartoons can contribute directly to the method of ordinary motion pictures. The whole comic-strip method, which is, of course, at the basis of the animated cartoon, is foreign to that of movie making. The economy of means which good movies display is utterly different from the economy of the cartoons. The kind of visualization a director is said to need is quite different from the visualization a comic strip artist needs, even when the comic strip artist is drawing scenes to be photographed for an animated cartoon; the whole process of composition,

and later, of editing, is of a totally unlike sort. The very precise, pert relation that must obtain between sound and images in the animated cartoon so that they click together like the point of a good joke and the immediate laughter can have little use in the movies proper, unless the movies are to copy directly the methods of the cartoon. When, in an ordinary movie, sound is intelligently used it increases the dimensions of the image; in a cartoon, the dimensions remain the same. Even the fantasy of the movies must be constructed on a different plane; not, of course, in the heavy-handed manner of the long-gone *Thief of Bagdad*, but more properly of Lubitsch's comedies. It isn't possible to reduce the problems of one medium to the problems of another and hope thereby to solve them. Certain hilarious scenes in René Clair's recent *Le Million* might suggest a likeness of spontaneous horse-play to the doings-about in a *Mickey Mouse* cartoon. But a resemblance could be traced equally well between the French picture and some of Mack Sennett's comedies. The likeness lies not at all in the method but in the swiftness and complex change of movement; in other words the likeness lies in common farcical principles from which the animated cartoon, as well as the comedies, draws for its effectiveness.

The effectiveness of the animated cartoon cannot, for all the banality it now exhibits, be denied. It is a distinct addition to the movies and the skill and ingenuity of its creators — the cartoon was distinguished even before the advent of sound — cannot be overestimated. What remains to be seen is what will be done with a medium in which the technical method has been so aptly and slickly worked out.

KENNETH WHITE

Betty
Fleischer Studios

Mickey Mouse
Walt Disney

Bimbo
Fleischer Studios

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Fourteen years ago the Bolsheviks set out to accomplish deeds which are without parallel in history. As their final objective is a complete social transformation, it is inevitable that they will arouse the deepest social and personal prejudices. Indeed, near and far-sighted historians have long been predicting the fall of the Soviet Union (within three months). Liberal critics view it as a laboratory where a "great experiment" is being performed; it will either succeed or fall. To some, the Soviet Union is an *enigma*, a land of *paradoxes;* to others, a monster that will eventually destroy civilized society. To the Russian masses, however, it is a means to the real-

ization of a better and fuller life than they have hitherto known.

The history of mankind, to the Marxist historian, consists of a long series of social movements and changes. Although their connection is hardly perceptible, they present a dialectical chain of evolutionary transformation. Thus, if we want to understand any episode in history, we must first of all make a thorough investigation of the various successive historical events leading up to it. The Western observer, however, has his own criterion of judging. Equipped with a scientific Western "impartiality" he measures facts with his own yardstick and generally draws false conclusions. Thus, the majority of books dealing with Soviet Russia speak of the peasantry as an ignorant and meek race, while Communism is represented as a foreign German idea fostered upon the masses from above. Yet, a careful study of the history of Russia would show that since the seventeenth century there was a continuous thread of revolt which culminated in Communism. As early as the seventeenth century, Stenka Razin sowed the seed of Bolshevism in Russian soil. Even to-day, the peasants sing ballads of him who, according to the legends, took from the rich and gave to the poor. Then there was the great rebellion of Pugachov in the nineteenth century which may be considered as the first inter-racial revolt, for the Cossack Pugachov not only strove to free the Russian peasantry but also the Tartars, Bashkirs — oppressed nationalities of the once great Russian Empire. The French Revolution, too, had its influence upon Russian thought. It found expression in the conspiracy of 1825 that was led by young aristocrats and officers who while fighting Napoleon absorbed the revolutionary ideas then prevalent in France. But it is the revolution of 1905 that is considered by historians as the rehearsal for the elemental and all-devastating outbreak of 1917.

I

PRIOR TO OCTOBER

During the 1905 revolution there were three major revolutionary parties operating in Russia: Socialist Revolutionaries, Bolsheviks and Mensheviks. Of these, the Socialist Revolutionary Party was the largest and most Russian. It was a direct descendant of the *Narodnaya Volya* (People's Will) of the 70's which had been a sort of a reformist sect of benevolent autocrats. They loved the peasants

philanthropically and nobly, like a Southern gentleman loves his black mammy. This movement gave an opportunity to the vast and idle Russian intelligentsia to relieve their boredom and their otherwise unused energy. They thought, and wrongly so, that the way to revolution was across the huge ocean of Russian peasantry. In 1901 the Narodnaya Volya reorganized and formed a political peasant party, the Socialist Revolutionary, which is responsible for the far-famed acts of terrorism. Much of the leadership of this party came from the nobility. They were naïve and adventurous aristocrats, who having no clear-cut revolutionary outlook based all their hopes on the notorious *Boyevaia Organizatsia* — Terrorist Unit of the Party. Its function was to condemn and assassinate the ministers of the Tzarist régime most notorious for their acts of cruelty. They hoped that by deeds of individual heroism and martyrdom they might awaken the world to the tyranny that was then Russia. Naturally, the Tzarist government answered terror with terror. It is with the organization of the Ochranna, the Tzarist Secret Police, with its vast net of espionage and provocation that the romantic period of the Russian revolutionary movement begins.

Provocateur is a historical novel based on the conspirative combat between the members of the Terrorist Unit and the Ochranna. It is a captivating narrative and swift-moving. Here dynamite is intermingled with a Dostoyevskian pathos, conspiracy with heroism, treachery with love. Evno Azef, the Iago of modern history, who was the chief of the Terrorist Unit and at the same time an agent provocateur of the Ochranna, is the central figure of this bloody drama. In his thirst for power, money and women, Azef played a hazardous game. He sold the heads of the Tzarist officials to the revolutionists and the heads of his Party comrades to the police. For ten years he thus maneuvered between the police department and the terrorist organization. Exposed by Burtsef, "The Sherlock Holmes of the Terrorists," he disappeared from the scene and died a peaceful death in Berlin.

Of no less notoriety in the Terrorist Movement was Boris Savinkov, poet, renegade, executioner — right-hand of Azef. His *Memoirs of a Terrorist* cover the most exciting period of terrorist activity, from 1902 to 1909. It was he who was commissioned by Azef to supervise the assassination of the Minister of Interior Plehve, Grand Duke Sergius and the Tzar. True, many of his associates like Kalayev and Sazanov were sincere fighters for liberty. Savinkov, however, was merely an aristocratic adventurer. After

the October revolution and during the Civil War, when there were no more Tzarist officials left to be killed, he, with equal zest, organized pogroms and tortured Jews. Needless to say, his Memoirs as well as the *Provocateur* are as thrilling as an American gangster movie. Moreover, they deal with an important chapter in the history of the Russian revolution.

Despite the adventurous type that flocked to the Socialist-Revolutionary Party because of its policy of individual terror, the Party as a whole was at one time deeply rooted in the Russian soil. Having a peasant orientation, it failed to realize that at the beginning of the twentieth century a dominant force, a new class, was rising in Russia — the proletariat. Rapidly emerging from her feudal state, Russia was entering an era of capitalist and industrial development. By the end of 1897 there were already over two million workers congregated in the various industrial centers. With the partial Westernization of Russian economy came also the Westernization of the Russian idealogy and revolutionary tactics. Thus, in 1898 the first Marxian party was organized. In 1903 it split into Mensheviks and Bolsheviks with Lenin as the Bolshevik leader.

While the Socialist Revolutionaries based themselves solely on the peasantry, the Mensheviks, who comprised mostly exiled Russian intellectuals residing in the West, accepted the Marxian economics, but failed to master the elasticity of his dialectics. Marx, they claimed, spoke of the hegemony of the proletariat only; hence, they, too, looked hopefully toward the city proletariat, failing to realize that unlike the West with which Marx dealt, Russia was still predominately a country of peasants. Lenin, on the other hand, was the only Marxist who knew Russia. If one was to give a symbolic interpretation of his strategic victory, it would be expressed by the word *Smychka* — Unity between city and village, proletarian and peasant.

II

LENIN

Historical materialists have long since ceased to look upon the individual genius as the sole maker of history. "It has long since been noticed," wrote Plechanov, one-time teacher and friend of Lenin, "that talents appear always and everywhere, where there exists favorable conditions for their development." In other words, every genius who has risen in life, every talented man who became a

social force, is the product of social relations. Carlyle attributed the changes in history to heroes — *beginners*. Marxists emphasize that the most common cause of historical change is the development of productive forces which in turn condition the corresponding changes in the social relations of men. This was Lenin's formula. He considered himself just a tiny screw in a gigantic machine — the Party. But history decreed differently. After a careful examination of the history of the October Revolution, it may not be altogether absurd to speculate as to what would have happened to the revolution had not Lenin been there to supervise it. Kamenev and Zinoviev, then the leaders of the Bolsheviks in Petrograd, were opposed to striking at the opportune moment. They would surely have missed the opportunity which the situation offered. Lenin, on the other hand, correctly diagnosed the situation and applied a timely cure. He thus saved the revolution and definitely affected the course of history.

The secret of Lenin's greatness lies, I believe, in his denial of personal glory and his forging of an impersonal instrument — the Communist Party. His success can be traced to his magnetic personality and tremendous will power. What is more, he had a most remarkable ability for analyzing situations and doing the right thing at the right moment.

Neither D. S. Mirsky nor George Vernadsky knew Lenin, the man. They both present a colorless portrait of the most dynamic personality of our time. Much space has been devoted by them to a description of Lenin's pre-revolutionary activities consisting of a detailed and endless succession of his strategic attitudes. Vernadsky, a professor at Yale, is openly hostile to Bolshevism. We must, it seems, discard the contradictory and fantastic misinformation with which he intersperses his story. When the revolution broke out in Russia, Lenin was a political exile in Switzerland. It may be taken for granted that there was no earthly power that could have kept him away from the revolution, his long-cherished dream. But because, from the very outset, he proclaimed his opposition to the World War as an imperialist war, both England and France refused him permission to pass through their territory, but Vernadsky tells us that "neither Lenin nor any of his sympathizers . . . applied to the English or to the French authorities for permission" . . . Unimportant a detail as this may be, it is nevertheless the central point of Vernadsky's "biography". For, when after a considerable delay, Lenin finally decided to go through Germany, an enemy

territory, he was later accused by Kerensky of being a German agent. Of course, it stands to reason that Germany was not prompted by any altruistic motives. She expected a service for a service. History, however, has already proven that Lenin, the revolutionist, saw much farther than Ludendorff, the general. But to Vernadsky, the academician, historian of the past, the present, even in the face of the Soviet Union, does not exist. He still sticks to the old housewife's tale that Lenin was a German agent. Of course, Professor Vernadsky has a right to his own opinion, but in the face of facts, this charge disqualifies him as a bona fide biographer of Lenin and historian of the Russian revolution.

D. S. Mirsky, on the other hand, as he tells us, is decidedly pro-Bolshevik. A son of Prince Mirsky, who was Minister of the Interior during the reign of Nicholas II, he had first fought with Denikin against the Bolsheviks. To-day, thirteen years later, as professor of literature at the University of London, he proclaims his allegiance to Leninism. Yet his very acceptance of Leninism is essentially non-Leninist. Mirsky is a patriot and a nationalist. He would attribute to Lenin, the internationalist, a nationalist tendency — a tendency which Lenin most abhorred. Except for one chapter in the book, he hardly ever speaks of Lenin's human side. Nay, accepting the formula of Dan, leader of the Mensheviks who said of Lenin that "There is no other man who is absorbed by the revolution twenty-four hours a day, who has no other thoughts but the thoughts of revolution, and who even when he sleeps dreams of revolution", he reduces Lenin to a mere political automaton. Neither Mirsky nor Vernadsky were able to cope with Lenin's personality. The man has eluded them. Perhaps he was too much of a revolutionist to be judged by professors.

It is Ferdinand Ossendowsky who has treated us to a grotesque portrait of Lenin — Lenin, the superman, *God of the Godless*. More than a hysterical melodrama, this fictionized biography is a pathological lie. Mr. Ossendowsky quotes speeches that were never made, he cites proclamations that were never written and depicts scenes that never took place. Events that did occur he distorts and falsifies. Rather than a biography of Lenin, this book is a psychologic revelation of the author himself. Mr. Ossendowsky's sadism is best revealed in a description of the most minute and bloody details of a scene, the supposed trial of the girl who attempted to assassinate Lenin. A quotation will speak for itself.

"He flung the door open and Lenin stood spellbound. In the room

directly opposite the door was a large sofa, upholstered in red velvet. Against that warm, bright background was the naked body of a woman. . . . As Lenin sat there his mind flashed back to the old days when he used to stand enraptured before the statues in the Louvre, in Dresden and in Munich. But in that vaulted room with its oppressive smell, his thoughts were animal. . . . There came to his mind the verses of the Song of Songs:

> "'How beautiful art thou, my love, how beautiful art thou!
> Thy lips are as a scarlet lace; and thy speech sweet. . . .'

Two soldiers pulled Dora to the wall where they fastened her in spread-eagle fashion. . . . The body of Dora Frumkin lay against the wall with the blood streaming where her breasts had been. . . . Suddenly, Lenin sprang to his feet. . . . 'Finish her off!' he cried in a choking voice. . . . 'Finish her off!'"

An adequate life of Lenin is still to be written. There is an enormous literature of recollections of Lenin. The best of them that have been translated into English are the *Memoirs of Lenin* by N. Krupskaya, his wife and collaborator, and *Reminiscences of Lenin* by Klara Zetkin. Both women knew Lenin intimately. They were with him in exile and when he presided in the Kremlin over the People's Commissars. Theirs are simple and modest statements, recording discussions with Lenin about culture, women, friends, youth, art and many other problems of life which reveal him as the man, I believe, he was.

As a political strategist Lenin will be remembered for his insistence upon the speedy conclusion of the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty and for his tactical retreat from military Communism to the NEP (New Economic Policy).

A unique document disclosing the relation of the United States toward Lenin and Russia during the period of the Brest-Litovsk negotiations is Edgar Sisson's *Hundred Red Days*. It so happened that, simultaneously with Mr. Sisson there was another American in Russia, John Reed. These two men have nothing in common, yet it may be interesting to note that John Reed, whether he agreed with Bolshevism or not, sensed that he was amidst history in the making and he drank the full cup of the Russians' ecstasy. Mr. Sisson, however, was at all times occupied distributing Wilson's war leaflets. John Reed later recreated his experiences in the great epic, *Ten Days That Shook the World*, while Mr. Sisson treated us to a masterpiece of illiteracy, falsification and venom. John Reed met

Mr. Sisson and forgot about him, but Edgar Sisson did not forget John Reed. He did his utmost to direct him into the channels of "good" Americanism, but when the newspaper *Izvestia* reported that "Comrade Reed promises when returning to the conservative country of the ruling imperialists, to tell the American proletariat about everything that is happening in revolutionary Russia, and he is deeply convinced that this will call forth an echo among the oppressed and exploited masses", Mr. Sisson was disappointed. "Poor, brilliant, unhappy Reed!" exclaims the hundred per-center.

Mr. Edgar Sisson went to Russia as a representative of President Wilson and George Creel. His function, as he modestly tells us, was "the diffusion of information of American purpose and effort . . . and from the Russian base to do whatever possible to weaken the German morale". For that purpose he employed five hundred Russian orators to influence public opinion, a large force of inspectors to spy on these orators, and seven hundred secretaries, probably to spy on the inspectors. During the three months of his stay in Russia, $5,512,000 was spent on propaganda for war to safeguard democracy.

The author's work, we are told, brought him in close contact with the "cynical Bolshevik band". He talked with Lenin and jested with Radek. Lenin pleased him, for "he did what I wanted him to do, the more so because he did it quickly". I am inclined to think that Lenin must have liked Mr. Sisson too, for his penetrating eye must have at once surmised that the great American war meddler saw no farther than his nose. For, if it was Mr. Sisson's mission to prevent the conclusion of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, there is no doubt that in spite of his narcissistic praise he failed miserably. As a consolation, however, assisted by the notorious spy and gangster, Semenov, he manufactured a series of documents, known as the *Sisson Documents*, purporting to prove that Lenin and Trotsky were German spies. In spite of the fact that these documents have long been proven forgeries, their author still insists on their authenticity.

III

THE FIVE YEAR PLAN

Lenin died, but the wheel he set in motion continues to turn. Overcoming plots, intrigues, and allied intervention, through famine and exhaustion, the revolution has reached its present stage.

At first viewed as an economic vacuum, to-day alarmists proclaim the Soviet Union as an economic threat to the world. But regardless whether the Five Year Plan will succeed or not, there is something captivating in this gigantic attempt, unheard of in recorded history, that stirs the imagination of a stagnant world.

Dr. Arthur Feiler, former editor of the Liberal Frankfurter Zeitung, who came to Russia full of good intentions, failed to grasp the spirit of Russia's rebirth. In the *Russian Experiment*, where he deals with many phases of Soviet life, including the Five Year Plan, he merely adds to the vast amount of impartial confusion and helps to cloud the facts concerning social and economic life under the Soviet Government.

Socialism, he informs us, means wealth. "But the present experience of Russian humanity is poverty and deprivation." Disregarding, of course, Dr. Feiler's erroneous conception of Socialism, it would be absurd to deny the fact that the absolute economic welfare of the workers in the highly developed Capitalist countries is on a much higher plane than in the Soviet union. If, however, we compare the living conditions of the majority of the Russians under the Tzarist régime with that under the Soviets (which most of the Western critics fail to do), or if we compare the sum total of Soviet achievement during the thirteen years of its harassed existence with that of the highly developed capitalist countries, the tables will be reversed. For while the latter have been on a gradual economic decline and are experiencing now an acute economic crisis, the Soviet union not only escaped the worst effects of the crisis, but, according to G. T. Grinko, Vice Chairman of the Five Year Planning Commission, will accomplish its ambitious Five Year Plan of Industrialization in four years. And when Dr. Feiler is appalled by the housing shortage and the "human dwellings which are literally nothing more than caves", we must remember that these are still remnants of old Russia. Where now there are only four industrial workers to a room, according to the Trade Union statistics, before the revolution there were seven. Moreover, Dr. Feiler admits in another sentence that in new Russia "up-to-date buildings and occasionally even skyscrapers are the order of the day".

Nor are we assured of the authenticity of Dr. Feiler's information when he tells us that university professors are allowed by the government only a few rubles' worth of foreign books and periodicals, and scientific and intellectual intercourse with other countries is almost entirely suspended. Any one who reads the newspapers, particu-

larly the dispatches of Walter Duranty, correspondent for the *New York Times*, will remember that only a short while ago forty Soviet engineers came to this country for the purpose of study. And numerous commissions of scientists are being sent out annually by the Soviet government to the United States and various European countries. Even in the field of literature there are few modern books of interest to the Russians, be it Chinese, German or American that have not already been translated into Russian. Examine, for instance, the list of American authors who have appeared in the last few years in Russian translation: Jack London, Sinclair Lewis, Upton Sinclair, Theodore Dreiser, John Dos Passos, Michael Gold, Eugene O'Neill, Langston Hughes, Charles Yale Harrison and many others.

Like Dr. Feiler, William Henry Chamberlain is an excellent reporter. He, too, had to turn to books for the study of pre-revolutionary Russia, but as correspondent of the Christian Science Monitor, he has lived in Russia for the past seven years, traveled extensively throughout the country and has a rich knowledge of Russia of to-day. *Soviet Russia: A Living Record and History* is by far the most pretentious book that has yet been written about that country. It is full to overflowing with facts and figures. This book, the author tells us, is an attempt to present an impartial analysis of what is happening in Russia to-day. Incidentally, it is also a modest venture into the future of the Soviets. There is hardly a phase of Soviet life that Mr. Chamberlain does not discuss in his nineteen chapters; including the Communist Party, economic life of the country, Russian minor nationalities, the youth, leaders of the revolution, education, culture and art, the decay of the old intelligentsia, the new Russian woman and liberty under the dictatorship of the proletariat. In his attempt to be impartial Mr. Chamberlain presents a vast number of fundamental facts about which he hesitates to venture any conclusions. He agrees, however, (1) that large scale landowning has been abolished, (2) that private property has been replaced by state control and operation in industry, (3) that the workers and peasants are given preference in political and educational opportunity. But (and there is always a but to everything under *Sovietiana*), (a) will the revolution succeed, (b) will it be able to create a highly productive industry which will give the Russian people not only higher quality but also higher standards of living, (c) will it be possible to transform a backward, semi-feudal agriculture into a mechanized and collective agriculture? In other

words, will Communism succeed? These questions, the author being impartial, does not answer.

Nor are the answers to be found in the works of Bruce Hopper and Calvin B. Hoover. *Pan-Sovietism* in content and treatment is similar to *Soviet Russia, etc.* Both authors attempt to be all-inclusive and present as a background a short review of Russian pre-revolutionary history. But where Mr. Chamberlain is informative and dynamic, Mr. Hopper is sophisticated and dull. Fortunately, he makes no pretences to impartiality since his purpose, as he clearly states, is to unearth the secret of Soviet expansion — Pan-Sovietism, towards the East so that the United States may check it in time. He predicts that the future battle for economic supremacy will be fought between the United States and Soviet Union on Chinese territory. But hold! It's not yet too late. The U. S. may still come out on the top. For in spite of the severe economic crisis and widespread unemployment, there is no cause to "assume that America in 1931 is as full of dynamite as was Russia in 1917". Furthermore, Mr. Hopper has his doubts as to the ultimate success of the Soviet Union. One reason is that Russia has not yet passed through the stage of parliamentary democracy. Scholar that Mr. Hopper is, he is nevertheless ignorant of the historical theory of *irregularity of development.* It has long since been known, that just as every society must not pass, let's say, through the stages of fishing and hunting, so does not every country have to pass through the stage of parliamentary democracy. What is parliamentary democracy? In the West, it was the state form corresponding to the rise of the industrial bourgeoisie. Russia to-day, however, can benefit directly from the highly developed technique of the already mature West and does not have to go through all the painful stages of development. Hence, it must not necessarily pass through the stage of parliamentary democracy. In fact, they did have it during the eight months of Kerensky's régime and discarded it. Finally, Mr. Hopper, basing himself on the records of students of the Tzarist's régime, contends that much that is considered to be new in Russia is really old and that Communism is still in the "never-never land", points refuted by Calvin B. Hoover.

In the first chapter of *Economic Life in Soviet Russia*, Professor Hoover states emphatically that "the Soviet economic system is not a mere modification of the capitalist system . . . it is a truly socialist economy — the first of any size that ever existed". He agrees with Mr. Chamberlain that property, except for the most

personal kind, has ceased to exist as a social institution. Even though his views are colored by a perceptible bias, he nevertheless admits that the Soviet government has demonstrated its ability to accumulate industrial and financial capital. What's more, it has learned the trick to operate industry without the gold standard. As a disinterested observer, Professor Hoover admits that the results of the Five Year Plan are *fairly favorable*.

In the realm of figures and statistics, Professor Hoover is cautious, objective and scientific. As a critical summary of Soviet industry his book is a valuable contribution. When, however, he encroaches upon the field of sociology and history, his generalizations lack an historical perspective and sometimes clarity. For instance, in the first chapter Professor Hoover tells us that Russia has truly a socialist economy, that *surplus value* no longer exists "since the proletarian state succeeded the capitalist state". In the concluding chapter, it seems that Russia is not a socialist state, that the income (part of surplus value) "that was taken away from the exploiting classes has not yet been transferred to those who despoiled them." Moreover, without any basis for it, Professor Hoover contends that living conditions at present are much inferior to the conditions during the Tzarist régime. And when he observes that "one rarely sees a smile or hears a laugh" in Soviet Russia, it is at once apparent that his sociologic observations are somewhat naïve.

The four books considered so far are attempts to describe and interpret Soviet Russia by men who have personally observed it. They are significant in what they reveal of this "new experiment", and also as a measure of the middle class approach towards it. Here are interpretations contradicting interpretations, facts contradicting facts, and statements of fair, intelligent principles of judgment followed by a disregard of these principles. Yet, overlooking their preconceptions and presuppositions, the authors of these books have presented a summary of Sovietism based on study and research, which, if read critically, will give one a glimpse of what is taking place in the Soviet Union to-day.

The Red Trade Menace, as a study of the Five Year Plan, stands in a class by itself. Mr. H. R. Knickerbocker, foreign correspondent of the New York Evening Post, if he is nothing else, is master of the genteel art of lying. During the seven weeks he spent in Russia he visited Moscow, Nijny-Novgorod, Ufa, Baku, Tiflis, the Don Basin — nineteen industrial centers covering an area of 10,000 miles.

To any serious student of economics it will seem highly improbable that in such a short visit Mr. Knickerbocker was indeed able to make a "thorough" study of the food situation, the railroads, steel plants, chemicals, tractor factories, convict labor, tea production, coal mines, etc. If, however, he hasn't learned anything about Soviet industry, he was nevertheless able to gather a number of surface facts, basing his conclusions rather on sentiments than on actual observations. He repeats the notorious fable of forced labor and Soviet dumping, ignoring the fact that export from Russia to-day is not as great as during the Tzarist régime. For instance, in 1910 the grain export of Tzarist Russia totalled 25% of the world exports, whilst in 1930 the Soviet share of world grain exports was only 20%.[1] Also the export of manganese ore was 51% of the world export during Tzarism but only 35% under the Soviet régime. It seems to me that it is *The Red Trade Menace* that is a product of *forced labor*.

After examining such a variety of books on the Five Year Plan written by "impartial" observers, one may ask what indeed is the truth about the Five Year Plan? Where is the key to the riddle? I believe it will be found in the following books: *The Five Year Plan of The Soviet Union*, *Piatiletka*, *New Russia's Primer and Russia's Productive System*. Mr. G. T. Grinko presents in *The Five Year Plan of the Soviet Union* a clear-cut political defense of the Soviet system of planning. Russia, he points out, is a country of class antagonisms — bitter struggles between the workers and peasants as against the remnants of capitalist and feudal elements in the U. S. S. R. and against the whole capitalist world. Its objective is socialism. It is axiomatic then that the first prerequisite for the creation of the socialist society is the industrialization of the country. Russia needs chemicals, coal, iron, steel as well as the necessities of life for its workers. These she lacks; these the Five Year Plan intends to create. In summing up the results of the first two years, Mr. Grinko shows that whereas the goal for the first year, 1928–29 was to increase production 21.4%, the actual increase was 23.4%. While the plan increase for the second year was 24%, the result was an increase of 30%. So significant have resulting increases been over the planned increases that it is now intended to complete the plan in four years instead of five.

Like Mr. Grinko, Michael Farbman, who carried on his researches

[1] See the speech by Litvinov, Soviet Commissar of Foreign Affairs, delivered at the European Commission, May 18, 1931. Worker's Library Publishers. $.02.

for the London *Economist*, is interested in the technical aspect of the Five Year Plan. He devoted most of his time to the study of Soviet agriculture and in that sense, the *Piatiletka* supplements Mr. Grinko's work.

The movement to collectivize the land started in 1930, which Stalin describes as the "year of the great break". Since then, this new agricultural revolution has become the outstanding factor in the Soviet program. Although its aim is to industrialize agriculture, to get control of and increase by scientific methods the food supply of the entire nation, the real issue, however, lies deeper. It is the historic struggle between individualism and collectivism, between private enterprise and collective ownership. Outside of the scene of action, one can hardly conceive the rapidity with which events are moving in the Russian village. This is the subject of Mr. Farbman's investigation, and the *Piatiletka* tells the tale.

Dramatic in its presentation of the Five Year Plan is *New Russia's Primer*. In a realistic, often lyrical, style Mr. Ilin begins the story of the great plan. "To tell in one's own words about this great plan is a difficult task. To relate in a small booklet all that is told in 1680 pages of figures, tables and brief explanations, is this possible? Thousands of people worked over the Five Year Plan, and I alone wish to tell about everything." It isn't novel to sing odes of praise to machinery. It has been done in the past, and poets will also wax lyrical over machinery in the future. But never before have I read a book dealing with factories, machinery, agriculture, that can so capture the imagination of young and old. The New Russian Primer has not been written for us. It was intended primarily for the growing youth of Russia — the youth upon whom Lenin based his hopes. Its purpose is to explain to them the nature of planned economy. However, Professor Counts, the translator, suggests that this book will also do well to serve as a guide for American adults. This may seem somewhat naïve. Mr. Ilin, for instance, whoops with delight because a dam is being built over the river Dnieper. Yet dams have been built before in America. Nor can Russia's modest achievements in industrialization overwhelm a hard-boiled American looking down from the Empire State Building. But when the author explains, "We have a plan!", we feel that it is more than a conceited boast. It is more than a cold-blooded statement of fact. It is an epic expressing the soul of old Russia emerging from its dark sleep of ignorance — a song about the birth of a new Russia.

Even more pithy in style and valuable as a document dealing with the mechanics of the Soviet industrial machinery is Emile Burns' *Russia's Productive System*. If objectivity is not merely a word in the dictionary but a reality, Mr. Burns reaches to its heights. In a lucid and simple style, he tells precisely what the industrial system of the Soviet Union is. He describes with an astounding impartiality and precision the process of planning industry and the method of wage payments. "Insofar as the new system extends," he concludes, "there is coordinated production and distribution, there is a steady extension of the means of production and of the volume of products: more labor is being employed every year, working hours are being reduced, and — in spite of temporary shortage of certain products — conditions are improving for both the town and country population. Only an ostrich can continue to deny that these results are obtained and no economist, no politician, no employer and no worker can afford to ignore a new productive system which is giving such results."

IV

THE INDIVIDUAL AND CULTURE UNDER THE FIVE YEAR PLAN

So mighty is the driving force of the Plan, so great is the struggle for its achievement that it overshadows its meaning and purpose, yet its final objective must not be lost from sight lest it become a plan for the sake of planning — *Fordisatsia for the sake of Fordisatsia*. Two revolutions have whirled across the lives of one hundred sixty million people. The bloody revolution of October and the bloodless Five Year Plan — how have they affected them as individuals?

Mr. Maurice Hindus has a unique advantage of studying the individual under the Soviet régime. Himself a Russian who emigrated to the United States at an early age, he still remembers the old *muzhik* of pre-revolutionary Russia whom he constantly uses as a background and contrast in his study of the new Russian peasant. His acquisition of American culture lends to his story a certain amount of detachment. Mr. Hindus's approach is that of an artist. He centers his attention mostly on the *human interest* side of the revolution. Both *Humanity Uprooted* and *Red Bread* are largely records of the author's own adventures. They have a wide range,

for the author has visited the country many times and has traveled throughout it extensively. Also a knowledge of the Russian language enables him to talk with people, enter into their confidence and extract the most minute details of their lives. His description of people and scenes are often lyrical and vivid. But where *Humanity Uprooted* deals with Sex, with the Family, Religion, in the abstract, *Red Bread* is a study in the concrete. It brings us into intimate contact with the peasants whom the Soviet transformation affected most.

There is Yekim Lavrentin, the dark-minded peasant of the author's native village, "who had no mind for anything big or new, and this revolution with its *Kolchozy* (collective farms), and other ozy was compelling him to think, think, think, until he had no brains for anything else". Or Vera, the Komsomolka — young Communist league member — the flesh of revolutionary flesh. Her whole life is centered around the success of the revolution. At eighteen, she is an excellent orator, energetic organizer and supervisor of the cultural activities of the Kolchoz. Extraordinary and vivid characters such as these symbolizing the great change in Russian life stand out in every page of Mr. Hindus's account.

William C. White, too, approaches *These Russians* as an artist. He, however, centers his attention chiefly on the backyard of the revolution. He, too, records conversations or rather complaints of a professor, a housewife, a merchant, a priest, a soldier, a student and a worker. It is strange that after having observed and spoken to so great a variety of people Mr. White found nobody resembling the Vera of Maurice Hindus. Of course, there is Adamova, the student, an energetic peasant girl, secretary of the Komosomoltsi, but she is unattractive. "Why," Mr. White's mouthpiece asks, "is it always the unattractive women that go in for politics? Is it the same in America?" — utilizing the old gag that radicalism is a substitute for sex.

Mr. Hindus in a sense also was stranded in the *backwash* of the revolution, but unlike Mr. White, he reached a wider perspective. To him these housewives and professors — innocent victims of change — become illuminating details on a huge multi-colored canvas, the revolution. To Mr. White, however, they are entities in themselves. All he can see and understand is the egoistic way of getting a better life. He looks for immediate satisfaction of the petty desires of the individual. Unlike Maurice Hindus, he does not understand that the aim of the revolution is the transferring

of egoistic wishes into a collective striving and the realization of the great aims of the whole. Thus, Marfusha, the housewife, who longs for a pair of American silk stockings, or the professor's fat wife, a violent anti-communist and anti-semite, are to Mr. White, earnests of the failure of the Russian revolution.

Professor George S. Counts, on the other hand, approaches the Soviet Union as an educator. In the *Soviet Challenge to America*, he views the revolution not merely as a bread and butter change, as liberal critics often do, but primarily as a cultural upheaval.

Culture has a definite meaning to different people. To the Western critic who sets out to weigh the cultural achievements of Communism, culture means the higher and more refined means of life of the upper section of the ruling class with which he is associated. When he discovers that as yet the revolution has not produced a Dostoyevsky or Chekov, he shrugs his shoulders and turns away disappointed, but to the Russian masses, as Professor Counts points out, the greatest cultural achievement at present is the liquidation of illiteracy. In 1920, three years after the revolution, 63% of the inhabitants of the Soviet Union could neither read nor write. Originally, it was the goal of the Five Year Plan to raise the level of literacy to 93% in the cities and to 79% in the villages. However, the progress which was made during the first year of the Plan was so great that the Central Committee of the Party decided to shorten the time within which this goal was to be achieved. Thus, these percentages will be obtained at the end of three years.

The immediate purpose of the Five Year Plan, Professor Counts tells us, is the industrialization of the Soviet Union at a tempo hitherto unparalleled in history. Its final objective, however, is not as many Americans believe, industrialization — to overtake in technique the highest developed capitalist countries in the shortest possible time, but, as formulated by the Fifteenth Party Congress: "The decisive raising of the cultural level of both city and village population, the development of the national cultures among the peoples of the Union, and the inclusion of a plan of cultural construction as an inseparable part of the general plan for the socialistic construction of the Soviet Union."

This is the purpose of the Five Year Plan. To those who are able to guide themselves through the labyrinth of anti-Soviet propaganda and penetrate through the smoke screen of preconceptions, a mighty spectacle will unfold itself. True, many will say that there

is nothing new in the Soviet idea. It has been spoken of by Plato many centuries ago, the Chartists, Utopian Socialists — they, too, dreamed of a society based not on profits and exploitation but on coöperation and freedom. Yet, while their ideas have been merely philosophic speculations, the Soviet Union is a concrete realization. It is not yet perfect, it may not be for many years to come, but the embryo is there — the road toward a new world is being paved.

I can still remember the little Russian muzhik plodding after his bony horse, toiling and toiling from dawn till night — half beast, half man, he was kept by the rulers amidst mud and superstition.

But the world went topsy-turvy . . .

It must have taken a mad revolution to make him "think, think and think until he had no brains left for anything else". To-day, the little brother no longer prays for rain, and the tractor he once considered an *unholy spirit* has taken the place of his sorry horse. Perhaps that is why Nekrasov, Turgenev, poets and writers, who portrayed the peasant of the past, became objects of the literary museum, for a new life produces a new literature.

Those who, like Father Walsh[2] and Eve Garrett Grady,[3] spread lies about the Soviet Union should be answered with the words of Gorky, "Why do you not protest against the State system which allows an insignificant and morally degenerate minority to dispose of the lives of the majority, infected with its flaws, and hold it in conditions of ignorance and poverty, throwing millions of peoples of different countries into battle and mutual destruction? . . . Does it not seem to you that this stupid order serves only as an obstacle to real common human culture of which you platonically dream?"

As for the future of the Soviets, one might well remember what Maurice Hindus said: "It will take an upheaval as mighty and as bloody as the one Russia has gone through, to win the revolutionary youth back to a feeling of contentment in an individualistic society. This fact alone would make the conquest of Russian territory by an alien power a gruesome tragedy for its present youth. Before there can be subjugation, there would have to be conversion and extermination. . . ."

LEON DENNEN

[2] *The Last Stand.* By Edmund A. Walsh. Little, Brown & Co. $3.00.
[3] *Seeing Red.* By Eve Garrett Grady. Brewer, Warren & Putnam. $2.00.

THE REAPPEARANCE OF PHOTOGRAPHY

ATGET. *Paris: Jonquieres; New York: E. Weyhe.* 1930. $7.50.

STEICHEN THE PHOTOGRAPHER. *By Carl Sandburg. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co.* 1929. $25.00.

DIE WELT IST SCHÖN. *Ein Hundert Photographische Aufnahmen von Albert Renger-Patzsch. München, Kurt Wolff Verlag.* 1928.

PHOTO-EYE, *76 photoes of the period. Edited by franz roh and jan tschichold akademischer verlag. dr. Fritz Wedekind & Co., Stuttgart.*

ARTS ET METIERS GRAPHIQUES. *Paris.* 1930. *Numêro spêcial consacrê a la photographie.*

ANTLITZ DER ZEIT, *sechzig aufnahmen deutscher Menschen des 20. Jahrhunderts, von August Sander. Transmare Verlag, München, Kurt Wolff Verlag, München.* 1929.

The real significance of photography was submerged soon after its discovery. The event was simply the linking of an already extant camera with development and fixation of image. Such a stroke of practical invention was an indirect hit which in application was bound to become tied up in the peculiar dishonesty of vision of its

period. The latter half of the nineteenth century offers that fantastic figure, the art photographer, really an unsuccessful painter with a bag of mysterious tricks. He is by no means a dead tradition even now, still gathered into clubs to exhibit pictures of misty October lanes, snow scenes, reflets dans l'eau, young girls with crystal balls. In these groups arises the loud and very suspicious protest about photography being an art. So there is in one of the anthologies under review a photo of a corpse in a pool of blood *because you like nice things*.

Suddenly there is a difference between a quaint evocation of the past and an open window looking straight down a stack of decades. The element of time entering into photography provides a departure for as much speculation as an observer cares to make. Actual experiments in time, actual experiments in space exactly suit a post-war state of mind. The camera doing both, as well as reflecting swift chance, disarray, wonder, and experiment, it is not surprising that photography has come to a valid flowering — the third period of its history.

Certain men of the past century have been renoticed who stood away from this confusion. Eugene Atget worked right through a period of utter decadence in photography. He was simply isolated, and his story is a little difficult to understand. Apparently he was oblivious to everything but the necessity of photographing Paris and its environs; but just what vision he carried in him of the monument he was leaving is not clear. It is possible to read into his photographs so many things he may never have formulated to himself. In some of his work he even places himself in a position to be pounced upon by the most orthodox of surréalistes. His general note is lyrical understanding of the street, trained observation of it, special feeling for patina, eye for revealing detail, over all of which is thrown a poetry which is not "the poetry of the street" or "the poetry of Paris," but the projection of Atget's person. The published reproductions are extremely disappointing. They and the typography and the binding make the book look like a pirated edition of some other publication.

America is really the natural home of photography if photography is thought of without operators (sic). Except that Edward Steichen has made up a book that happens to stand on the present shelf, the American problem is almost too sad to restate — and too trite. Steichen is photography off its track in our own reiterated way of technical impressiveness and spiritual non-existence. In paraphrase,

his general note is money, understanding of advertising values, special feeling for parvenu elegance, slick technique, over all of which is thrown a hardness and superficiality that is the hardness and superficiality of America's latter day, and has nothing to do with any person. The publication of this work carries an inverted interest as reflection of the Chrysler period.

Without money, post-war Germany experimented with photography heavily and thoroughly. There was an efficient destruction of romantic art-photography in a flood of new things which has since lost its force. But the medium was extended and insisted upon, even though no German master appeared. The German photo renascence is a publishing venture with political undertones. Renger-Patzsch's hundred photos make a book exciting to run through in a shop and disappointing to take home. His *is* a photo method, but turns out to be precisely the method that makes it said "painting is no longer necessary, the world can be photographed". It is a roundabout return to the middle period of photography.

Photo-eye is a nervous and important book. Its editors call the world not only beautiful but exciting, cruel, and weird. In intention social and didactic, this is an anthology of the "new" photography; yet its editors knew where to look for their material, and print examples of the news photo, aerial photography, microphotography, astronomical photography, photomontage and the photogram, multiple exposure and the negative print. The pictures are introduced by an essay which must be quoted (leaving its extraordinary English translation as it is in the book):

the importance to the history of mankind of development of instruments such as the camera, lies in obtaining increasingly complex results, while the handling of the apparatus becomes more and more simple. to maintain that "short cuts" by relieving him of all effort, lead but to man's greater dulness and laziness, is romanticism in the minor key. the field of mental struggle is but changed to another place. . . . is it but necessary to master the implements of photography to become a good photographer? by no means: as in other fields of expression personality is required. the peculiar human valuation of form at the time is expressed in the photo just as it is in graphic art. . . . it often occurs that photographs taken by the one will always appear uninteresting, though he be skilled in technique, while photoes by the other, who considers himself but an amateur and whose work is not technically perfect, yet invariabley are of forcible effect. . . . some misinstructed people still raise the question whether. . . . to produce a photo full of expression and finished to the very corners can be an impelling inner necessity. what we mean is the question whether we are . . . concerned

here with *art*. commonplace men and "connoisseurs", both of whom gen ally are misforms of existence, still often meet in refusing to the most fin ished of photographs the quality mark of "art". either there is here but the semblance of a problem, since the definition of art is wholly time-bound, arbitrary and ungreat, or human sight is totally deformed and susceptible only to one kind of beauty even opposite nature. if however we understand art as an end in itself, called forth by man and filled with "expression", good photographs are included.

Photographie is the French equivalent to *Photo-eye* with the added intention of giving a history of photography. It is without tendency but has lost consistency by a de luxe process of reproduction. An essay on *photographie vision du monde* could be a good deal briefer than the one which prefaces this collection. But it is valuable, in its French-intellectual way, a respectable statement of the functions and possibilities of photography. The reproductions do little to illustrate this essay.

Finally the photo document is directed into a volume, again in Germany. *Antlitz der Zeit* is more than a book of "type studies"; a case of the camera looking in the right direction among people. This is one of the futures of photography foretold by Atget. It is a photographic editing of society, a clinical process; even enough of a cultural necessity to make one wonder why other so-called advanced countries of the world have not also been examined and recorded.

WALKER EVANS

ASCETIC AND MYSTIC LOVE

STUDIES OF THE SPANISH MYSTICS. *By E. Allison Peers, M.A.* (*Two Volumes. London: The Sheldon Press. Vol. I*, 1927. *Vol. II*, 1930.)

These two volumes are a continuation of the author's book, "Spanish Mysticism, a Preliminary Survey," published in the year 1924. "The principal aim of this Survey," says the author, "was to give some idea to English-reading people of the wealth of mystical literature which Spain can boast, and so to pave the way for a larger work, which . . . will be found to contain studies of all the noteworthy mystics of Spain's greatest age. Of this work, the first volume, dealing with seven writers, is now published." The seven writers dealt with are: St. Ignatius Loyola, Luis de Granada, Francesco de Osuna, St. Theresa, St. John of the Cross, Luis de Leon, Juan de los Angeles.

In the second volume we have studies of thirteen more mystics, "some of them very nearly of the highest rank, and together comprising a group, which, with that of the seven figures already treated, may be taken as thoroughly representative of the Golden Age of Spanish Mysticism" (p. vii). Representatives of the Teresan Period, of Franciscan Mysticism, of Augustinian Mysticism, and of Post-Teresan Mysticism are given.

The author has an intimate and comprehensive knowledge of his subject. To this knowledge he adds a reverent love of the spirit and the aim of these Master-minds of Spanish spirituality. He is doing for the English-speaking world what Abbé Bremond is doing for the French-speaking world — satisfying the growing desire among serious-minded men and women to know more of the deepest all of realities, the intimacies of the divine union of the Soul with God. He lets the Spanish Mystics speak for themselves; and rarely offers any remarks, other than those of a guide, who speaks only when it is necessary for the convenience of his charges. To the Student of the Golden Age of Spanish Mysticism the work is invaluable, in that he is introduced to treasures, spiritual and literary, which have no equal in modern letters.

But there is a wider appeal than that of desire of the general reader to know, and of the intellectual curiosity of the specialist to verify; it is the appeal in the form of an answer to a natural craving in the human heart. That craving is the insatiable hunger in the soul for the Supreme, for Ultimate Reality, for the Unchangeable, for That which Is. Can the mystic help us in our approach? Here it is where such studies as these are justified. The mystics have lived in personal contact with Supreme Reality. The aim and purpose of the mystic's literary labours is to formulate methods and to offer means of allaying the hunger, as well as to describe the joys and the forms of the ineffable, if transient, satisfaction of the soul's union with God. And though some of them are consummate artists in literature, theirs has never been merely a literary adventure, or a psychological experiment by way of an intellectual hobby; it has always been for them a matter of life or death. Their works are descriptive records of their own experimental knowledge, possession and enjoyment of God.

But are these mystical experiences verifiable? That is one of the prime questions of the philosophy of mysticism that cannot be discussed here. Suffice it to say, that to most men there are vouchsafed apocalyptic glimpses of another world. In times of great trial, physical, mental or moral, or of deep unutterable delight, there is a denudation of soul, in which we see ourselves as we really are; when ordinary occurrences seem meaningless and mean, or transformed in the light of some high purpose of another world. The mystic is an expert in these soul experiences, that are transient to us. He gives us news of that other world, from which, for most of us the veil, is for very short spells only lightly lifted. But he is

so accurate in his descriptions of states, that we have had in common with him, that we know, that he is telling us of what he has seen. And we trust him as a Seer for the rest.

There is a rich mine of spiritual treasure in these volumes for the heart and the intellect of the reader. There is no other nation that has written so vividly, so richly and so alluringly of the splendours and the depths of divine union as the Spanish. Supreme Reality for these great spirits is God; and the purpose of our existence is our personal union with Him. That is their experience: that is their philosophy. The statement of one of them may be taken as the experience of all of them. "Love has unitive and transformative virtue . . . it transforms the lover into the object of his love, even as the seal and stamp is transformed into soft wax by the action of the heat of the sun or of a fire. In the which transformation, the seal is the active part, the wax is passive, and the fire dispositive. Even so, he that loves suffers. He that is loved works, and love it is that disposes. I, if I love Thee, am transformed in thee; and thou, if thou lovest me, art transformed in me: the which cannot come to pass unless love enters between us. This is not a transformation of bodies . . . but of wills, of minds, of hearts" (Juan de los Angeles, Vol. I, p. 371). Here is the height, beyond which the human soul cannot go; the height, called transformative union. Up to this experience all spiritual effort aims at conformative union, or the active surrender of the human will to the divine will. "Happy, indeed," says the same mystic, "happy beyond compare, is the soul, which, in that kiss of God, — when He, without means soever, unites it with Himself — is transformed and deified; and dying to itself and to all that is not God, lives to God alone" (p. 371).

With a wealth and variety of quotation from the Master mystics of the Golden Age the author shows us the splendid realities of the mystic life. It is a matter of deep regret that he did not take from one of them a guiding definition of mysticism, instead of taking Rawlinson's vague description of a mystic, as one "who has fallen in love with God" (Vol. I, p. xiii. Introduction). Spanish mysticism may be defined, and the definition will cover the whole realm of Christian mysticism, — as the contemplative union of the soul with God. The late Padre Arintero, O.P., was scientific in reducing contemplation to the five fundamental degrees: Recollection, the Prayer of Quiet, Union, Espousals and Spiritual Matrimony. The three first belong to Conformative, the two last belong to

Transformative, Union (Evolución Mística, p. 491). The Master mystics of Spain know of no mysticism that is not conformative or transformative union. But they do know of souls in love with God, who are not mystics. The purely moral and ascetic writings of men like St. Ignatius Loyola, Luis de Granada, Luis de la Puente, and even de Osuna, had for their purpose, to excite where it did not exist, and to foster where it did exist, the love of God in the souls of men. But this moral and ascetic love is by no means mystical. Ascetic love is active and acquirable; mystic love is passive, unacquirable and infused. To put it another way: mystic love differs from ascetic love in genesis, purity and perfection (Onf, The Mystical State, pp. 162–5, by Saudreau). Moreover, if to "fall in love with God" is mysticism, then the difference between mysticism and ordinary religious experience is one of degree, and not of kind; and with Von Hugel, it might be held, that every man is a mystic, because he is endowed with an inchoate aptitude for recollection, intuition and emotion. Be that as it may. Mysticism with the Spanish Masters is an infused, passive grace of union. And many a soul in love with God has not received this mystical favor. However we may differ as to the origin and the nature of mystical graces, one thing is unquestionably clear in the writings of Spanish Contemplative theologians; and that is, that every mystic is in love with God; and that everyone in love with God is not a mystic. It is, as we said above, matter of regret that our author did not give freer scope to his scholarly love for precision. It would have saved him from including in his work much that is scarcely mystical. Much on Luis de Granada, de Puente, St. Ignatius, de Osuna, and more on most of the men in the second volume, are more ascetical than mystical. Of parts of his studies, however excellent they are in themselves, it may be said what he, himself, writes so discriminatingly of the "Exercises" of St. Ignatius: they are "only in a wide sense of the word mystical, and throughout, . . . what we find (very strongly, it may be granted) is the mystical habit of mind, and affinities with mystical teaching, rather than such teaching itself" (p. 13P).

The author very courageously sets out to describe the characteristics of the Spanish mystical habit of mind. In his Introduction, Vol. I, p. xv, he enumerates the "particular characteristics, the combination of which, in a marked degree in Spanish Mysticism, gives it an unmistakable individuality. It is concrete, practical, personal, experiential, active. He works out more in detail these

ideas in his fine work, "Spanish Mysticism, a Preliminary Survey" (Chapter V, pp. 40–47). No one can doubt for a moment that Spanish Mysticism has the five qualities he claims for it. But are they characteristics? Except for the literary style, we have failed to find any characteristics that distinguish the Spanish mystics from the mystics of other lands. All mystics must be concrete, personal, experiential, practical, active. It may be in the combination of these features that racial characteristics are to be found. But, personally, we have not been able to see any distinctive characteristics in the Spanish Mystic that are not to be found in, say, the Benedictine German mystic of the twelfth century, or in the Italian Franciscan Mystics of the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. It would be easy to draw contrasts between the concrete, personal, experiential mysticism of the Spaniard and the Speculative, Platonic mysticism of the twelfth century, or the excessive speculative mysticism of men like Ruysbroeck and Tauler. But the contrasts would not prove that the experiential, practical mysticism is characteristically Spanish; since the whole reaction against excessive, intellectual mysticism has always been, as it was, for example, under the lead of Gerson, pre-eminently concrete, practical, personal, experiential, active. The truth is, we think, that mysticism is so individual a life, so personal an experience, that it eludes the general tests of racial psychology, and cannot be classified under the terms of national characteristics.

There is one of the features of the mystic, the personal, which Mr. Allison Peers appears not to have grasped in its practical bearing on the mystic's life. The mystic is endowed with a sense of spiritual values, which, experientially, he intues or verifies: he has a sense of the spiritual significance of things, many of which, are seemingly insignificant. In his eyes there is nothing so insignificant, nothing so contemptible, as himself. It is to us a matter of extreme surprise, that so sympathetic an admirer of St. Theresa as Professor Allison Peers, fails to see the real, personal, mystical sanity of her wonderful humility. He writes: "If there is one trait in St. Theresa's character which repels us it is a self-effacement carried to excess and suggestive of something, the very reverse of true humility. Can she really have thought herself a 'sea of evil,' 'a filthy scum,' 'the weakest and most wretched of all who have ever been born?' . . . We prefer to think that they (such statements as these) were penned in moments of depression, or at seasons when her ardent love of God and her clear vision of His holiness made

her write, passionately rather than reflectively, lines which she could never bring herself to erase. Most saints have at times done the like" (Vol. I, pp. 149–50). It was precisely her vision, "her clear vision of God's holiness" that gave her that sense of her utter unworthiness and offensiveness, as a sinner in the sight of God. Her sense of sin lay in her realisation of its atrocious nature, as an offence against God, and in the appalling fact, that she, of all beings, should ever have been guilty of rebellion against Him. That, in her eyes, is too terrible for any created being to have done, who had been favored by God, as she had been. We may find an analogy in the uniqueness of a mother's agony at the death of her only child. To her no other evil is comparable. And relatively to her, no other evil is comparable. Her soul is swamped. If the world had loved her child as she did, the world would grieve as she does. St. Theresa's sense of offensiveness incapacitates her from seeing anything so vile as her own infidelities against Adorable Love. Indeed, the more a saint reflects upon the vileness of sin in the Eyes of God, the deeper becomes the saint's desire for self-effacement. It is the reflective tranquillity, not the passionate abhorrence of sin, in a saint's humility, that terrifies most of us, and that most of us find, through our lax, impersonal notions of sin, difficult to appreciate.

If we have singled out for critical remark these minor points, it has not been through lack of appreciation of the very many excellent qualities, in which the work abounds. To any reader interested in mysticism, in general, or, in the Master minds of Spanish spirituality, in particular, we whole-heartedly recommend this scholarly and easily readable work on the Spanish Mystics.

FATHER PETER DANIEL HUGHES

GILBERT'S JOYCE

JAMES JOYCE'S ULYSSES, A STUDY. *By Stuart Gilbert. Alfred A. Knopf.* 1931. $5.00.

Mr. Joyce's *Ulysses* has remained undigested for years. Its unfamiliar forms and techniques, its multitude of philosophical, literary, philological and historical allusions, and its Homeric parallels, have refused to reveal their fundamental unity and "true import". Mr. Joyce made his early discoveries and decisions in terms of scholastic dogma, and then retired to work out the implications in solitude. The result, *Ulysses*, is still bringing most of us out so far and making us trot so quick that we can hardly get our bearings. Mr. Gilbert, however, seems to have arrived, all breathless, at the point where *Ulysses* becomes comprehensible to each according to his capacity — like Dante's God, completely satisfying every saved worshipper while His own being is unspent.

Mr. Gilbert's book is therefore immensely valuable, and if future students will absorb it they will be saved many a gross error of interpretation. He has looked up a great many (though I should not dare to say all) the allusions; arranged them to illuminate the appropriate sections; and, after four introductory chapters discussing sources, method and subject-matter, he has analyzed each of the eighteen episodes. Mr. Gilbert has not only been diligent — he speaks with authority, having had Joyce's personal supervision. He gives us

the outline and Homeric parallels: in the first episode, for instance, Telemachus is Stephen; the significantly-chosen scene is *the tower;* its hour, *8 A.M.;* its art, *theology;* its color, *white, gold;* its symbol, *heir,* and its technique, *narrative, young* — which we might have known before; but he makes clear how these elements determine every speck of the episode. He helps out our ignorance of metempsychosis and early Irish history from the *Bibliothèque Nationale,* and in short leaves us no excuse but laziness for failing to understand the structure of the whole.

If there is a criticism to be made of what Mr. Gilbert set out to do, it is that his book may come to stand as a dilute substitute for the original — though he warns the reader against taking him for the master. But it is important to remember, too, that, having understood *Ulysses* as well as one can, there is still a crying need to see it in relation to something else. When Mr. Eliot reviewed it for the Dial in 1923, he adopted his usual attitude of one literary man speaking to other (slightly less initiated) literary men, about a work of interest to all: "A step toward making the modern world possible for art," he called it; explaining how the structure of a myth might be made the framework for a vast picture of contemporary society. But Mr. Gilbert addresses the rapt reader of *Ulysses,* Mr. X. whose devoutly single aim is instruction. Professor Curtius, tackling the work in the *Neue Schweizer Rundschau,* said of its final impression, "All these gifts serve but to spend themselves, to refute themselves, in a world-conflagration, a flaming welter of metallic iridescence . . .", but added that there was a certain exaltation to be got out of contemplating a picture of chaos: "The Inferno of Ulysses is, so regarded, itself a Purgatory." But in Mr. Gilbert the reader and critic are lost in the expositor, who gives back what he conceives to be the meaning, without the living voice of Joyce. He mentions Professor Curtius' impression, but says only, "It must be remembered that Joyce is an Irishman."

In short, Mr. Gilbert, panting at the end of his long trek, is still so completely within the Joycean world that he feels no need of a perspective on it. He says in his preface that his aim was to enlighten writers influenced by *Ulysses,* and to demonstrate its precise, classical composition. In the latter aim he has been very successful; but as for the "writer", he leaves him in a region inhabited only by Mr. Joyce, Mr. Gilbert, and what he calls "the hydra-headed rabble of the mental underworld".

This suggests one of the alarming ambiguities in Mr. Joyce's own

attitude, as we feel it in all his work. He is always showing us his alter-ego obsessed by absolute alternatives. In the *Portrait of the Artist*, Stephen must have either the god of the dogmatists or no god at all. In *Exiles*, Richard Rowan, writer, is the diametric opposite of Robert Hand, journalist. When, in *Ulysses*, Bloom and Stephen finally meet, their encounter precipitates the "end of the world". Is Mr. Joyce, with his clear and calm perception of these alternatives, and many others, the only complete humanist? Or has he, like Mr. Gilbert, deified his genius, made it the eye of God? Or both?

And so it is that the next step, from the point where Mr. Gilbert leaves us, becomes extremely urgent. This next step would not be to try to answer questions like the above directly. That would lead to the transcendental heresy, to arguing *Ulysses* out of existence by "placing" its author; at best, to understanding without experience or belief — in short, to Mr. Edmund Wilson. It would be, rather, to try to compare Joyce with great writers of the past, and to study his influence on Eliot and Pound — two writers of different temperaments and gifts who started from comparable *données* for comparable ends. The neophyte is bound to ransack his reading for a personal discipline; he finds contemporary masters issuing apocalypses from their arrived summits; but a comparison of ultimatums is still an interesting possibility.

Also, if these same hypothetical writers of Mr. Gilbert's, who try to be the *Ulysses* school, once got oriented, decided they had something to say, there would be the Joycean mine of technique, revealed by Mr. Gilbert, to be exploited with the aid of other practitioners of the literary art. Thus one might take Joyce's symbolism, ask oneself how it differed from the religious and traditional variety of Dante on one side and the esthetic verity of the *Symbolistes* on the other. One might try to see how, with its complete self-consciousness, it yet attains, at its best, an organic unity like the best Elizabethan poetry; and one might try to see Henry James's art of thinking concretely as one of its immediate ancestors. These and many other questions might be asked, and Mr. Gilbert's book would help one to the answer, but tonelessly, without hope of anything after Joyce.

FRANCIS FERGUSSON

NO BOSWELL

PORTRAITS IN MINIATURE. *By Lytton Strachey.* New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company. 1931. $2.50.

"The art of biography," wrote Mr. Strachey in the preface to his first essay into this field, "seems to have fallen on evil times." Whereas the two charges laid upon the biographer were "a becoming brevity" and the maintenance of "his own freedom of spirit", the Standard Biography which has yawned out in "two fat volumes" by a friend of the family or a hired hack to whom the family paid a surely excessive fee, had smothered the "most delicate and humane of all the branches of writing". Followers of Boswell and Lockhart had abused their masters' method, with the result that discomfort and ennui had been for years the reward of those who read the Nineteenth Century lives of the great. That Mr. Strachey hoped consciously to resuscitate this art is probable: that he would now confess this to have been his intent is more doubtful. Yet, we had the right, thirteen years ago, to see in him a new genius of biography, to believe that his special gifts were enchantingly welcomed by the Muse he had chosen to adore, and to greet in him a legitimate descendant in the dynasty of Boswell, Lockhart, and Froude. Certainly, his Victoria seemed to confirm us in our faith. His Elizabeth . . . a little tried our patience. It seemed more an ornamentation than a history. The particular Gibbonian 'char-

acter' and the unmistakable Gibbonian 'atmosphere', although with something more of superciliousness and something less of serenity, Mr. Strachey still succeeded in transposing into his rather more florid key.[1] But there was absent from his writing a disinterestedness, there was present a personal bias, in one direction of perverse admiration, in another of a kind of feminine malice, that deceived our expectation. It is these same traits which, or the subject to exception, cause us to carry away from his "Portraits in Miniature" a thin and shrunken feeling.

Perhaps we looked for too much from Mr. Strachey, and certainly it would appear that he is not overwhelmed by esteem for those who seem to us his great predecessors. Boswell, he says, was "an idler, lecher, a drunkard, and a snob . . . a Rousseauite, . . . one of the first romantics, an inveterate sentimentalist" who "achieved a glorious triumph . . . by dint of the sheer force of native genius asserting itself over the extravagance and disorder of an agitated life."

Froude (and some readers may demand a justification of my position in including Froude among the great biographers: among them will not, I think, be any who have read all four volumes of his Life of Carlyle) "was a man of letters who was also a man of the world, an accomplished gentleman, whose rich nature over-flowed with bounding energy, a sportsman, a yachtsman, a brilliant and magnificent talker . . . an able and brilliant writer, copious and vivid, with a picturesque imagination and a fine command of narrative. . . . Yet the supreme quality of style seems to be lacking. . . . Perhaps after all it is the intellect and the emotion that are at fault here, too; perhaps when one is hoping for genius it is only talent — only immense talent — that one finds." Had he been able to overcome his prejudices, Mr. Strachey thinks "He might even have written immortal English prose. But alas! These are vain speculations; old Mr. Froude would never have permitted anything of the sort." Froude, in short, was haunted by the ghost of his father "who was a hunting parson of severely conventional type, with a marked talent for water-color".

Of Lockhart, Mr. Strachey has not, I think, written. But his

[1] *Cf.* With the Stracheyan style such fragments out of Gibbon's history as these: "the dark and implacable genius of superstition"; . . . "the various, though uniform, imprudence of his behavior"; . . . or: "Various modes of worship, which prevailed in the Roman world, were all considered by the people, as equally true; by the philosopher, as equally false; and by the magistrate, as equally useful."

admirer, Mr. Nicolson, a biographer not given to undue adulation, calls Lockhart "the second greatest (I am sometimes inclined to think the greatest) of all English biographers."

What qualities are shared by the idler, lecher, drunkard and snob; the man of letters and of the world; the sharp critic and editor of The Quarterly, devoted son-in-law of Scott and — Mr. Strachey? Primarily, all four writers have a passion for the truth. In the older writers it was the whole truth, completely documented. With Mr. Strachey it is a distillation the essences of which must be carefully selected, and selection, for an Englishman at least, implies an ethic. It is only in English, Mr. Strachey points out, that manners and morals are not expressed by the same word.

In "Queen Victoria" and "Eminent Victorians" Mr. Strachey's ethic goes hand in hand with his aesthetic and there is no temptation to color the substance. In "Elizabeth and Essex", the Renaissance ruthlessness has in some curious way warped Mr. Strachey's detachment and irony. One cannot feel that his interpretation of Bacon, "the wonderful snake", "the piece of shot silk" is dictated primarily by any passion for giving a truthful portrait of a great man.

Bacon ended, he writes, "an old man, disgraced, shattered, alone, on Highgate Hill, stuffing a dead fowl with snow." Having painted Bacon's life as that of a knave Mr. Strachey cannot resist — and is this not an indication of Victorian ethics? — allotting him a fool's death.

The unreliable, "maggotie-headed" gossip, John Aubrey, was Mr. Strachey's authority for Bacon's end. Let us read the earlier version of the event.

"Mr. Hobbs told me that the cause of his Lordship's death was trying an experiment; viz. as he was taking the Aire in a coach with Dr. Witherborne (a Scotchman, physician to the King,) towards Highgate, snow lay on the ground, and it came into my Lord's thoughts, why flesh might not be preserved in snow, as in salt. There were resolved they would try the experiment presently. They alighted out of the coach and went into a poore woman's house at the bottom of Highgate Hill, and bought a Hen, and made the woman exenterate it, and then stuff the body with Snow, and my Lord did help to do it himselfe. The snow so chilled him that he immediately fell so extremely ill, that he could not return to his lodging . . ., but went to the Earle of Arundel's house at Highgate, where they putt him into a good bed warmed with a Panne, but it was a damp bed that had not been layn-in in about a yeare before, which gave him such a colde within two or three dayes, as I remember Mr. Hobbes told me, he dyed of suffocation."

It is the biographer's business, wrote Mr. Strachey, in his first iconoclastic preface, "to lay bare the fact of the case as he understands them." What, in this instance, is responsible for Mr. Strachey's miscomprehension? Not blindness, surely. His point of view is warped, not as was that of the hagiographers, by a fervent bias in favor of their subject, but rather by an inability to achieve either complete detachment from or complete absorption in his subject.

Boswell, Lockhart, and Froude were all impelled to write the lives of great contemporaries whom they knew intimately, loved and admired. Apart from the dedications of his books and a little spoofing at Professor Whitehead in the essay on Dr. North, Mr. Strachey seems unconscious of the very existence of his contemporaries. His romantic love is for the eighteenth century, his strongest emotion a nostalgie de la ruelle. Carlyle, whose moralistic and prophetic nature so antagonizes Mr. Strachey, writes in his essay on Biography that the prerequisite of a biographer is "an open, loving heart, and what follows from the possession of such." If Mr. Strachey possesses a heart it is an organ to be thwarted by the head. True, Mr. Strachey does permit himself an occasional emotion; but it leads him almost unfailingly astray. His whole conception of feeling is curious and interesting. For Gibbon alone he has unbridled admiration; but then Gibbon is his spiritual ancestor. As opposed to Boswell, who achieved his triumph only "by dint of the sheer force of native genius asserting itself over the extravagance and disorder of an agitated life", there was never with Gibbon "any struggle, everything came naturally to him — learning and dissipation, industry and indolence, affection and skepticism — in the correct proportions; and he enjoyed himself up to the very end."

Struggle to Mr. Strachey is very distasteful. The "delicious perfection" of the eighteenth century, "that balmy time", seduces his imagination. But he would not have us think that the "sweet reasonableness" of the eighteenth century precluded vitality or the capacity for emotion. "It was not that the historian was a mere frigid observer of the golden mean — far from it. He was full of fire and feeling. His youth had been at moments riotous — night after night he had reeled halooing down St. James's Street. Old age did not diminish the natural warmth of his affections; the beautiful letter — a marvel of its kind — written on the death of his aunt, in his fiftieth year, is a proof of it."

It is a little difficult at this point to remain quite solemn. For if

one is to accept the fact of a young man reeling halooing down the street night after night as a sign of fire, Fifty-second street would indeed be a blaze of genius; and if the signal of natural warmth and feeling is a model letter on the death of one's aunt, one can only think that the ghosts of his eminent Victorians have played tricks on Mr. Strachey's unconscious mind. But one must remain solemn, for in his essay on Gibbon Mr. Strachey comes as close to warm admiration of a great man as is possible to him. One might even say admiration of a great contemporary, for like Proust's, Mr. Strachey's life is also a recherche du temps perdu, and to him the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are far more real and immediate than our own gloomy day.

His two major works and his best minor works all treat of women, women of a special type. Why did he choose to give us not the life of Mary, Queen of Scots but that of Elizabeth; not George Eliot but Queen Victoria; not Mary Wolstonecraft but Lady Hester Stanhope; not Madame de Stael but Madame de Lieven? It is not, I think, the snobbishness which he might be accused of sharing with Boswell, for there were many women of the great world without the characteristics which have drawn his attention. It is merely that, just as his predecessors were impelled to write about great men, so Mr. Strachey must write about powerful women, about such women as combine in an intricate and subtle way both male and female characteristics.[2] The moral struggles of poor Boswell he is incapable of understanding, but the struggle between the power-loving masculine side and the submissive feminine side of his heroines fires his imagination. He writes most luxuriously when portraying these conflicts.

Victoria was "the Queen of England, the Empress of India, the quintessential pivot round which the whole magnificent machine was revolving — but how much more besides! For one thing she was of a great age — an almost indispensable qualification for popularity in England. . . . She had persistent vitality . . . she was a character . . . her attitude towards herself was simply regal."

Mary Berry. . . . "There was nothing she could not bring about in her drawing room . . . but her masculine mind exercised

[2] Irrelevantly or not almost all of these women lived to a matriarchal age. Lady Hester and Madame de Lieven, the two youngest, died at sixty-five; Florence Nightingale at ninety; Queen Victoria at eighty-two; Mary Berry at eighty-nine and Queen Elizabeth and Madame du Deffand at seventy or more.

itself over higher things. . . . Had she been a man, she would not have shone as a writer, but as a political thinker or administrator; and a man she should have been; with her massive practical intelligence, she was born too early to be a successful woman."

Madame de Lieven. ". . . the Ambassadress was endowed with social talents of the highest order. She immediately became the fashion — and remained so for the rest of her life. . . . Henceforward, high diplomacy was to be her passion. . . . Though no longer in any official position, she was still perpetually occupied with the highest politics, was still the terror of embassies, still the delight of the worldly and the great."

Florence Nightingale. "At times, indeed, among her intimates, Mrs. Nightingale almost wept. 'We are ducks' she said with tears in her eyes, 'who have hatched a wild swan.' But the poor lady was wrong; it was not a swan they had hatched; it was an eagle."

"Lady Hester Stanhope's spirit was uncommon; and she met with a most uncommon fate . . . her three years with Pitt, passed in the very center of power, was brilliant and exciting. She flung herself impetuously into the movement and passion of that vigorous society; she ruled her uncle's household with high vivacity. . . . She was received everywhere" (in Syria) "as a royal, almost a supernatural personage; she progressed from town to town amid official prostrations and popular rejoicings. But she herself was in a state of hesitation and discontent. . . ."

Queen Elizabeth. "Nor was it only her intellect that served her; it was her temperament as well. That too — in its mixture of the masculine and the feminine, of vigor and sinuosity, of pertinacity and vacillation — was precisely what her case required."

What is there about these powerful and vigorous women, rebels and rulers, fulfilling simultaneously the functions of men and of women, that stimulates Mr. Strachey to his highest power? If the explanation appears over-simple, one can only point out that it is Mr. Strachey himself who has suggested it. In his essay on Froude he writes "We have our modern psychology to give us confidence," and he proceeds to explain Froude's life in terms of his unchanging adoration for his father.

"She seemed the type of the Victorian woman at her finest — many-sided, vigorous, adventurous, advanced. With her large and powerful frame, her strongly marked features, her manner that was so cordial, so humorous, and yet perhaps a little formidable. She seemed cast on a larger scale, made of more massive material than

the women of today. One could not but be aware even to look at her that she was in the line of a great tradition. She came of a family famous for its administrators and public servants; she married into one of the great Anglo-Indian families of the nineteenth century. One could easily imagine how, had she been a man, she would have ruled a province or administered a government department. She had all that instinct for affairs, that broad-minded grasp of politics that made the great public servant of the nineteenth century. But, in addition, like all Victorian women of her stamp, she was emphatically a mother and a wife."

Surely here we have the perfect subject to Mr. Strachey's hand — his mother. Mr. Strachey, in short, is the Peter Pan of biography. Perhaps I anticipate the Stracheyan biographer of Strachey when I suggest that he is his happiest, most talented self only when he is projected into a world ruled by one woman, serving as the prototype of his mother. I have spoken before of his romanticism. It is that of the small boy who never grows up, but lives always in a time of the world where there are no unpleasant complications (Mr. Strachey's Never-Never Land is the eighteenth century), in a drawing room where his mother is the one dominant force. In the age of reason, then, or in the presence of a species of noble virago, Mr. Strachey blooms. The men who interest him, apart from Voltaire and Gibbon, are eccentric little gentlemen with a tendency to gossip, amusingly crippled by a variety of social or biological idiosyncracies. Mr. Creevey, Muggleton, Aubrey, Dr. North, Emmanuel de Coulanges, Dr. Colbatch — each in his own way is a combination of bad little boy and querulous old woman. Mr. Strachey describes brilliantly these fluttering little men; but it is only their queerness, not their selves, that is his province, and we never see them save when, in the course of a mincing gait, they trip over the trains of great women.

I am brought thus to a charge for the illustrative support of which I have but too little space: the lapses of taste and the minor, prejudiced inaccuracies one had no reason to look for in the author of "Eminent Victorians."

Carlyle, "Instead of being put into a pit covered with opprobrium, . . . made a comfortable income, was supplied by Mrs. Carlyle with everything that he wanted and was the favorite guest at Lady Ashburton's parties." Anyone who remembers the years of hardship both at Craigenputtock and Cheyne Walk, the late date at which Carlyle met Lady Ashburton and the contention

the good woman caused in the life of the Carlyle household can only be shocked at Mr. Strachey's callousness in making his questionable point. The vulgarity of his phrase describing Freeman's death has been pointed out by another reviewer: "The professor had gone pop in Spain." The adolescent quality of his interest in Dr. North's "jests with the young noblemen" is apparent and the grace and sublety of the beginning of his essay on Congreve only make heavy and inept his final professional — and irrelevant — praise: "The comedies of Congreve must be ranked among the most wonderful and glorious creations of the human mind." And it was Congreve who told Voltaire that he wished to be remembered not as a playwright but as a gentleman.

It may be asked why, when reviewing "Portraits in *Miniature*", the critic deplores the absence of Olympian sculpture? Because of what Mr. Strachey's earlier work led us to expect; and because he has fathered so large a family of literary bastards, dabblers in the questionable art of making living images, spiced with petulance where his condiment was irony, touched up with exhibitionism where his weapon was frankness. And not only has he, willy-nilly, peopled our literary world with incompetents, he has been lulled patently into becoming a victim of his own family or school.

But the scale of a work is no indication of the artist's power. His approach and his emphasis determine its significance. Granted that Mr. Strachey's last book is intentionally minor and no test of his immortality let us be quite fair and examine as well the minor work of Boswell. One may open at random any page of A Journal of A Tour to the Hebrides and find no earmark to differentiate it from the great Life itself. And even in Boswell's Journal in Switzerland, a work hardly written with an eye to publication, we find the same extraordinary duplication of life and eager description of character. In the introspection of his journal, lies, perhaps, the clue we are searching. At the end of his astonishing visit with Voltaire he writes "This last conversation shall also be marked. It was truly singular and solemn. I was quite in enthusiasm, quite agreeably mad to a certain degree. I asked his correspondence. He granted it. Is not this great? Well I must here pause, and as an impartial philosopher decide concerning myself. What a singular Being do I find myself! Let this my Journal shew what variety my mind is capable of. But am I not well received everywhere? Am I not particularly taken notice of by Men of the most distinguished genius? And why? I have neither profound knowledge, strong judg-

ment, nor constant gayety. But I have a noble Soul which still shines forth, a certain degree of knowledge, a multiplicity of ideas of all kinds, an original humor and turn of expression, and I really believe a remarkable knowledge of human nature: this is different from a knowledge of the world as much as is the knowledge of a florist who understands perfectly the works of Nature, from that of him who understands flowers formed of art. The florist perceives in general that the artificial flowers are not natural, but whether they are made of gum'd linnen, of china, or of copper, he cannot tell. So I know in general your men of the world to be artificial. But am not able to develop their different quality. What is really Man, I think, I know pretty well."

To Mr. Strachey the "noble soul" is at most an amusing Rousseauism, yet it gave Boswell a knowledge of "what is really Man" as opposed to Mr. Strachey's talent for developing the different qualities of men of the world. One of these gentlemen, Mr. Strachey tells us, was "to go down in history as the man who had got the better of Voltaire". It is "an idler, a lecher, a drunkard, and a snob", who will go down in biographical history as having got the better of Mr. Strachey, though I dare say, the inheritance of the laurel is not, to him, a matter of great interest. He can always be sure that, crowned with a flower-wreath "made of gum'd linnen, of china, or of copper", he may wander through eternity with so charming a companion as Tallemant des Reaux.

MINA CURTISS

ROUGHRIDER, MUCKRAKER, GANGSTER

I

THE MARTIAL SPIRIT: *Being a study of our war with Spain. By Walter Millis. Houghton Mifflin Co.* 1931. $4.00.

There can be no doubt that the United States of America before 1890 was a different country from the United States of America after 1900. When the nineteenth century turned into the twentieth more was lost than a numeral. America gained a national consciousness and lost the qualities of distinction, excellence and locality which those who can afford the time to mourn such losses have mourned ever since.

Mr. Walter Millis, in his absorbingly interesting and very well-written history, exposes in the most seductive and exhausting detail the frightening comedy played by adolescents and blind men, with a worn-out monarchy for a stock-villain and a Charles Dana Gibson Rough-rider for hero. How the war was created by politicians for the sake of politics marks the downfall of an American foreign policy, perhaps of any American policy whatever. Monroe and Jefferson indicated a direction for a national diplomacy above the personal interests of themselves. As a result of debauchery such as the Spanish War created in Washington, it has hourly become more difficult for gentlemen to risk policy when they know they must be exhausted

in the gauntlet of politics. "The Martial Spirit" is all the more terrifying since it shows how many men in high places, Cleveland, for example, and other honest public servants, were completely unable to stop a war which their moral inferiors, the rising nationally and financially conscious generation of Lodges and Roosevelts, Hearsts and Pulitzers had set their hearts on.

If politics destroyed the possibility of policy in the Spanish War, the rise of yellow journalism crippled the hope for a national interest in objective information about political events. Hearst and Pulitzer in their insane race for a circulation increase gave us the methods of reporting which after castrating the news of truth have finally rendered the newspapers illegible, so boring has the reiteration of sensationalism become. Journalism on a big scale, the syndication of articles by telegraph have standardized a universal acceptance of news-print as printed. The "modern" methods which made the 1890's "war conscious", which made us think we were indulging in a holy crusade to free martyred Cuba, was the first appearance of the same tetanus that George Creel and his pamphlets about the Kaiser, the Beast of Berlin, created to save martyred Belgium; — the same tetanus that the newspapers of this country to-day can use to whip up any given war hysteria in six weeks, whether we fight England or France, Japan or Italy. The organization, the centralized control which is the gift of the demons of our hypnotized and automatic efficiency, is the useful key by which America can be exploited, controlled, victimized and rendered impotent by those imperialists who first tasted the fruits of victory at San Juan Hill and Manila Bay.

It was, as they said, a splendid little war. How our magnificent army triumphed over a fleet of ghosts is superbly told by Mr. Millis, who as a colonel's son has a close and actual sense of the pattern and quality of strategy in war. We see Henry Cabot Lodge and Theodore Roosevelt collaborating on their little fracas with all the proprietary occupation of Harvard seniors managing the elections of their final clubs. We see the ludicrous and tragic enthusiasm of Congressmen sending detachments of marines to various tropical strategic points. They looked pretty good on the map and they could apologize later when they discovered there was no water for miles about for the marines to drink. And there is the immortal incident of our General Shafter "racking his brains to discover whether he had won a smashing victory or suffered a major defeat".

Mr. Millis has detailed in all its comic, depressing entirety the history of the war with Spain. The confusion of purposes, the blindness of motives, the lack of information upon which to act, the ridiculous chimeras which were our targets are chronicled in a careful, ironic, passionate wholeness which the staff officers of history at West Point and Annapolis can only ignore.

The jingo nationals exulted that the war was the great demonstration of democracy, that Texan rangers rubbed shoulders with Virginia aristocrats, etc., etc. It was true, however, that college graduates seemed somehow to be given preference in detail, but even if the caste system was broken, it is hardly something to be pleased about. A caste system, a proper caste system, considering all the values of the empirical world, is what makes an international policy or attitude possible. A caste system is merely a system wherein the components know their proper place. The knowledge of their place makes them amenable to the controls of order, of law, of political direction within the system.

The Spanish War took away our provincialism and set us in the council of nations. The Monroe Doctrine still holds, but we find our national economic isolation harder to maintain. Before 1900 we wanted to be considered by Europe. After 1920 we were constantly considered and did our best to ignore the consideration. After 1930 we can no longer afford to be isolated. Our isolation and our integrity have gone to follow Cervera's squadron.

II

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF LINCOLN STEFFENS. *Two Volumes. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company.* 1931. $5.00.

This book is not only the history, the exposure, the muck-raking of the character of Lincoln Steffens but it is also the story of the American Liberal soul. It is a story of the triumph of the equivocal, the conquest or assimilation of circumstance by curiosity, without conviction or direction.

When Steffens was a boy at military school he stumbled on a vice ring of older boys who abused younger ones. It was a miniature white slave traffic. This appeared to Steffens as a good chance to introduce a fagging system into the school. "We made fags of the young criminals. It was fun." They enjoyed their power so much that they abused it and were discovered by the masters. Steffens

was had up as ringleader, but he refused to talk, although others had. The schoolmaster was frightened, did nothing to Steffens but make him witness the whipping. "I felt so mean that I would have submitted to any penalty, and I escaped all punishment. My first essay in muck-raking cost me nothing."

As a young journalist in New York he was interested in reform, in saving for himself and his city a taker of bribes, one policeman called Schmittberger. "I saw him attacked by a mob of strikers at the Fourth Avenue car barns. . . ." He was an artist with a police club, "tapping 'em always on the top of the skull so that they closed up like a knife." Later on he says: "I enjoy crime waves. I made one once. Jake Riis helped; many reporters joined in the uplift of the rising tide of crime; and T. R. stopped it." A while before he is "flabbergasted by Richard Croker", "who managed to fight against us, had his own machine, parts of the Republican machine, the saloons, gambling houses, all vice interests," etc., etc. — when he is told of a new policy — "a reform wave".

The education of Lincoln Steffens starts when he is "stunned" by the discovery that "there was no scientific basis for ethics". He leaves Heidelberg — "I must leave the philosophers and go to the artists for art." At Leipzig "There was no foundation in (experimental) psychology for a science of ethics."

The feeling of confusion which is so present in a reading of Lincoln Steffens' Autobiography is the general liberal fever and its causes lie somewhere in liberal, or in what is nowadays called progressive, education. The ranginess of his schooling Steffens considers admirable. It gave him absolutely no standards for intellection or behavior. The great fallacy of liberalism is that its reaction against puritan conformist morality goes only far enough to kick over the traces of convention without providing any substitute except a kind of nervous curiosity. His interest in the possibility of an ethic was the undigested and uncultivated inheritance of his puritan ancestry and he had the usual liberal delusion about his ability to find the absolute. There could not possibly be a more complete moral and philosophical confusion. Needing the crutches of the absolute and failing to find them, he considered that truth exists in the absolution by confession of any act, in an objective endearing retrospect.

As he was the type liberal, so also was he the type informed reporter. Such men are valuable as informers, only courage and intelligence should not be imputed to them, since they have no imagina-

tive nerves by which to be frightened, no minds with which to create. Since he had no standards and an eager nervous interest without orientation, he could perfectly well occupy himself with anything and everything. "I had become as infatuated with the Ghetto as eastern boys with the Wild West and nailed a mazuza to my door. . . . My friends laughed at me; especially the Jews among them scoffed. 'You are more Jewish than us Jews.'" His disarming charm, combined with an almost touching naïveté, made him arrive on ideas a little ahead of time or a little behind, and there were always people who would give this perennially amazed youngster an astonished hand. He was sent to muck-rake La Follette. "He needed a friend; he needed just what I could give him, national, non-partisan support. He took me home for supper with his family, who all greeted me warmly, even intimately on the assumption that I was their ally. I stood it for a while, then I repelled Mrs. La Follette with a rebuke that was rude and ridiculous. . . . My excuse was, and it is, that I had a vague plan to work up my article on La Follette out of nothing but what his enemies were giving me; any friendly intimacy between me and the La Follettes might spoil the effect I wished to get." Such rugged naïveté made him the great reporter he was. He could get his story, scoop the other papers and realize the difference between news and journalistic inflation. "All through those muck-raking days I was mistaken for an expert who knew all about graft and politics and government and could tell anybody just what to do about them. Thieves, politicians, business men, reformers, and our magazine readers, they all assumed that I had what I was trying to get: knowledge. In one way this was fortunate. The 'wise guys' would tell me their secrets. Thinking I knew anyhow, they felt that they might as well talk, the big-mitt men, for example; and I encouraged their self-deception."

Incidentally Steffens could have been an invaluable public servant. When governments were uninformed he could inform them through sources of private information and intelligence not in the possession of official departments. And yet though Steffens' information may or may not have been inclusive it lacked critical or selective wisdom, and Steffens had never the very real power or position of similar English observers, of Nevinson or Wilfred Blunt.

As a newspaper reporter with a nose for news he had his share of lucky breaks. As a journalist he was essentially romantic, literal-minded, sentimental and confused by the impact of the immediate

event. His great reputation as a reporter springs from the fact that he perfectly echoed the state of mind of his general readers. His inability to take a point of view was due more to a lack of concentration than a dispassionate attitude. His self-knowledge, his liberal's inner check gave him an accurate working introspection. One would have been impressed by his honesty. He knew when he was a boob and he could make his own insecurity endearing, a valuable weapon indeed when he was on the hunt for news.

As an autobiography the book is an anomaly. It starts out with extremely interesting personal memoirs and shifts over to a history of his times as he saw them. And yet much history is omitted. The Spanish-American War, for example, is slurred over, and only by fits and starts do we know what Steffens actually felt or thought. The style is readable, in no way distinguished, but some of his stories could not help but be well told — This story of Charcot: —

"'Go!', he said when he was through with a woman patient who had done her stunts, and then as she was passing off the stage, the professor struck the table with a hammer. The cataleptic stopped, stiffened, and stood rigid with her hands half lifted and her face turned back toward us.

"'La femme de Lot,' said Charcot, with a showman's flourish, and sure enough, there stood Lot's wife, a pillar of miraculous rigidity."

When all is said and done, one must admit that the muck-raker and the liberal have their philosophy and their convictions. Whether one can call them standards or not depends on the standards of the reader. They are the philosophy and conviction of the bourgeois intelligentsia of this country, of the valuable half-educated, "well" read, "intelligent" minority. Muck-raker believes and liberals believe that there are two or more sides to every question, and that fact almost absolves one from doing anything more about it than investigating the next question. He believes and they believe that Liberals could make a Utopia if there weren't "crooks". He believes and they believe "a crook" is someone who gets or accepts graft in opposition to those who consider him or them grafters of one sort or another. He believes and they believe that "crooks" will talk if they see you're sort of a "crook" too. He believes and they believe that what crooks will tell you is that money moves men and that renders liberals worldly, or cynical or disillusioned. He believes and they believe in "progress" which is the sum-total of man's achievement. He believes and they believe that "honesty", an exact inter-

pretation of exterior phenomenal circumstance from a worldly and material point of view, is the gauge of a man's worth and the attitude by which man has "progressed."

The liberal Steffens meets Mussolini —

"His answer showed that he understood my question and me, that I was a liberal with preconceived liberal principles and the liberal's inquisitiveness about the way to do whatever you want to do. His fierce face expressed his contempt for me and my kind and our dead logic."

"Nobody could, by an offer of money, make me suppress a fact or color a truth, but — yes, I did go a bit slow — sometimes — in something I wrote. Why? To keep my job, to keep my credit, to hold my readers and 'get by' my editors. Well, that was it. I was cheap, like any other good man; I did not come high, like an honest crook; I could be 'got' with my own salary."

And yet with bland and seductive honesty he sums himself up. We leave him lunching at the House of Commons with Liberal party leaders asking, "as I would have liked to ask the liberals in America, if they realized that they were not liberals; that liberalism was no longer an attitude and a philosophy, but a creed; that that creed had been exposed as false; and that, unlike truly liberal men, they had not learned anything from their war and their peace".

III

THE ONE-WAY RIDE: *The Red Trail of Chicago Gangland from Prohibition to Jake Lingle. By Walter Noble Burns. Doubleday, Doran.* 1931. $2.50.

AL CAPONE: *The biography of a self-made man. By Fred D. Pasley. Ives Washburn.* 1931. $2.50.

AL CAPONE: *On the Spot. The inside story of the master criminal and his bloody career (100 uncensored photos of gang murders and big shots). Graphic Arts Corporation.* 1931. $.50.

EXPOSED: *Stories the papers dare not print. Public enemies: who they are and how they got that way. Vivian Gordon, murdered queen of the blackmailers. Exposed Publishing Co.* 1931. $.25.

Names have an inherent, local fascination. Names call up in a breath, fragrance and distinction, actuality and an almost instinctive definition. The great names of Wolf Tone, Rory O'Moore,

the Croppy Boy, Absalom, Isaiah, Abraham, Lionello d'Este, Cesare Borgia, the Malatesta evoke on one's lips the very cadence of their quality. Dion O'Bannion, Bugs Moran, Klondike and Spike O'Donnell, William Gunner Macpadden and Paddy the Bear; Mike de Pike Heitler, Loving Putty Anixter, Izzy the Rat Buchowsky, Jew Boy Grabner, Yellow Kid Weill and Hymie Weiss; Diamond Joe Espolito, Dingbat Oberta, Vincent the Schemer Drucci, Baldelli the Eagle, Tropea the Scourge and Samoots Amatuna, whom Mr. Noble in his admirable history of the Chicago gangs says sounds like a plucked guitar, are Irish, Jewish and Italian names. In all the chronicles of gangdom in books, pamphlet and newspaper one looks in vain for "American" names, names suggesting nineteenth-century New England, the first families of Virginia, or Knickerbocker New York. The Adams and Lowells, Byrds and Wilsons, Van Rensellaers and Schuylers seem to prefer less desperate paths to anarchy than the one-way ride: distinctions to be drawn perhaps by the social historian between Nordic and Celt, Jew and Latin.

A beautiful name engenders a beautiful myth. Our academic and sententious chauvinists tell us we have our American myths, our Jim Bridgers, John Henrys and Paul Bunyans and actually Lincoln and Washington are American legends. But never before have we seen so conscious a creation of mythology as that which surrounds our gangsters. A myth is a lyric definition of a milieu and a localized society. It is told in a language that is part of the myth's glamor. And in its retelling it is constantly reaffirmed and corroborated in actuality. The myth is true. We all know very well what happens when gangsters die.

Daniel Iamascia, who was shot last Thursday morning when he and his chief, Arthur (Dutch Schultz) Flegenheimer, the Bronx beer runner, encountered the police, was buried yesterday from his home at 2313 Belmont Avenue, the Bronx. . . .

The body, in a German silver coffin, was borne around the block on the shoulders of six professional pall-bearers. The casket was then rolled into a white hearse, which led a long and slow procession to the Roman Catholic Church of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel. . . .

Employes of Daniel Scocozzo, undertaker, worked strenuously for an hour, carrying out the floral tributes and packing them into thirty-five open automobiles.

The mourners filled seventy-five limousines and fifty private automobiles. . . .

. . . The undertaker disclosed that Iamascia had purchased six ceme-

tery plots the day before he was shot and that the body would be placed in a $25,000 mausoleum to be erected there.

Flegenheimer, who is out on bail as a result of his arrest in the shooting affray with Detectives Stephen Di Rosa and Joseph Salke outside his apartment at 1212 Fifth Avenue, sent a diamond-shaped floral tribute eight feet high, and Ciro Terranova, known as The Boss, sent a fifteen-foot floral piece.

We all know that Alphonse Scarface Capone is Public Enemy number one, that he is the Rockefeller, Owen D. Young and Ford of gangdom, that his palace in Florida is bomb-proof, etc., etc., etc. If we read Real Detective Stories we also learn that Al Capone was murdered in a shack not far from Atlantic City some years ago — that his half-brother Giacomo Calabrese, after a facial operation, has been put on his throne and will serve his prison sentences. If we read Mr. John Wilstach's "Under Cover" we can keep up with the expanding gangster vocabulary. We'll find that death is a "stiff racket", that a "paper hanger" is a passer of bad checks, that a "torpedo" is an imported killer, that "the heat is on" means prohibition agents are in the vicinity. The gangster argot itself needs a dictionary for laymen, but laymen read in the tabloids language that describes gangsters, as localized and formal as a national rhetoric. The ghost-writer of the Graphic who described Vivian Gordon's progress surely can be linked to a decadent Elizabethan: — "The tarnished night-moth of Broadway winging her way through the Devil's bulb-lit garden." Like Dekker in his "Roaring Girl", where he made a dramatic character out of a well-known London whore, so the tabloids create for Manhattan an "Artichoke King". And today London and to a greater degree Paris consider Chicago and New York as Shakespeare considered Mantua and Verona.

The responsibility for the rapid universalization of the gangster myth lies with the newspapers and Hollywood. New York tabloids carry headlines on the day of Jack (Legs) Diamond's second trial "Odds 8 to 1 Legs Beats Rap". Newspaper reporters in their terse, ironic, extremely well-informed reports have popularized violence as a pabulum. The heirs of the muckrakers have a public prepared. If gangster carelessness happens to kill a few babies in Harlem instead of a beer-baron, the newspapers can cash in on a little extra circulation if they post an "extra and added" prize for the capture of the Kiddy Killers. Then the newspaper men are called to Hollywood to write script out of their past assignments. After all, they

ought to know almost as much about it as the gangsters, and they generally do. In "Quick Millions" we saw the Vitale banquet re-enacted; "Streets of Chance" chronicled the reign of Rothstein; "The Finger Points" equals Jake Lingle. In that best of all gangster pictures, "The Public Enemy", a "Nails" Nathan was thrown from his horse riding in the park. His henchman shot the horse. Actually "Nails" Morton was cantering along the bridle path of Lincoln Park; his horse threw him, fracturing his skull, and later the horse was put on the spot. Everyone knows how gangsters behave. Sure, we seen it in the talkies. It was Heywood Broun who first showed us how the underworld itself follows the movies in corroboration. When Crowley, a backward boy of twenty-one, entrenched himself in an uptown apartment house with another boy and his girl friend, it took gas bombs, machine-gun corps, movietone newsreel photographers, quantities of policemen to hold back the mobs that came to watch, and the police commissioner of New York City was actually gassed in the salient. Could anything have been more staged? Lately the "Star Witness" showed children as victims of gangsters. A few days after, the Harlem kids were sprayed by gangster guns. It becomes more and more difficult to determine whether the myth establishes the reality or the actuality — the legend.

The Chicago gangs are feudal, descendants of the secret societies, Mafia and Black Hand. The competition for the control of the Unione Sicilione between rival gangs has left a zig-zag of machine-gun scars across whole dynasties. The gang code, the moral and ethic principles upon which they work are series of contradictions and negations. It is a problem for the sociologist, more than for a social historian, to determine the actual basis of the gang-habit, the gang-attraction. Some weak characters are drawn in fealty or friendship to some stronger characters in a place where pickings are particularly good. There is no environmental background of restraint, only the attraction for personal prestige demonstrated by power of the most immediate, manifest and transitory kind. The development of organizations in various industries, beer, laundry, delivery, vice, artichoke, make centralization of control easy for the gangsters. They know the springs of power and they attack the center of the centralization. Opportunism, convenience, lack of any imaginative idea of past or future, lack of any interest in good or evil result in the gangster's bravado, his ingenuity, the friendly handshake that grips tight to hold a marked man for a bullet in the back, and the fact that there are few gangsters over thirty years of

age. Honor is a strange word in these times. We know there is no integrity among nations, and how then can there be among men? However, often as not, a dying gangster will keep his mouth shut to tease the police, for no apparent reason. Perhaps it is an atavistic hangover, a sleepy reassertion in the blood, of the traditions of the mercenary chivalry of the Italian Renaissance.

We are told that Al Capone loves La Traviata, that he dresses quietly, that his wife has nothing to complain of. He tells the newspapers that gangster movies are all wet, soft-boiled and a bad influence on children. He would also like to retire in peace from his present uncomfortable eminence. When the government pressed its attacks on him for falsification of income tax returns he was willing to settle amicably for four million dollars. The federal government refused. The psychology of Capone as the type gangster is difficult to comprehend. He has a considerable business acumen insomuch as circumstance in the line of succession put him where he couldn't help cleaning up. His directness, his ruthlessness and his automatic ingenuity, his cowardice and his contempt testify to what but the existence of positive powers of evil. Capone is the devil's revenge on us for no longer believing in him.

There is generally conceded to be a gangster menace. It is the present boon of editorial writers. The American Legion encamps in Central Park to be a warning to the "Hoodlum". One wonders if Al Capone, who insists on his A. E. F. record, and Legs Diamond, in spite of his general courtmartials will reune. There have been previous and parallel menaces in this country — the Molly Maguires and the great Pullman strike battles of the late nineteenth century. In these events federal intervention was brought to bear. If the government were sufficiently interested the gangster menace could probably be "stopped". It is not violent enough for an intervention. It is in reality a minor industry compared to the other legitimate rackets. The city police depend on gangsters for information and hope that they'll bump each other off. The general public doesn't much care whether beer is two or three cents a glass up or down, and we have become so bored with everything else as far as amusement goes that only murder, rape, etc., etc., seem to be able to titillate us.

We have rather an affection for the gangster. He is a scab we can pick. The thin blood beneath still can convince us, in spite of the signs about, that the body lives.

And yet — before we brush our teeth and turn out the light, let us flip over the pages of "On the Spot" to the wonderful photograph

on page twenty-eight. The body of Dominic Aiello lies in the gutter in a welter of gore. Behind are eighteen little Italian girls and four little Italian boys. Three of the little girls are sucking their thumbs; four are looking out of the picture at something else. The only worry of the rest is that they will not be included in the photograph.

IV

DAWN: *An autobiography of early youth. By Theodore Dreiser. New York: Horace Liveright, Inc.* 1931. $5.00.

The Small Boy Theo, timid, dreamy, who never was without that delirious sense of wonder that made every leaf in the field, every color of the setting sun, every word his mother spoke, a note of magic for him; a small shabby boy of an over-large family, migrating endlessly from one Middle-Western town to another.

The Growing Boy, stirred by the glamor of the feminine, the adolescent boy could only dream; he was too shy to act: "I was heartbroken to think that my youth, my looks, any lack of means, prevented me from entering upon or even anticipating any of the heavenly privileges here indicated. This one I envied for his looks, another for his clothes, another for his courage, and so on through a long catalogue of earthly and very youthful woes. The beauty of the girls, which had a stinging richness, ravished me of my very wits. As I saw them at this floodtime of youth, when the whole world was gilded by a substance which may have a deeper origin than blazing suns or circling planets, they were little short of magic and moon madness."

The Youth of Nineteen, a tall thin boy working now in a hardware store, now collecting for a laundry, performing gruelling manual labor, finding wild delight in the plays he watched, stricken at his constant dismissal from jobs because of his mooning. "What was I to do? How make anything of myself?"

This quoted wrapper of *Dawn* gives a very accurate account of Dreiser's autobiography. It is 589 pages long, printed in large format in small but clear type. Roughly speaking, there are 287,000 words in this tale of a 'breathing, sentient' dreamer, a man who is an artist and can serve as a type American artist. Dreiser's reputation is reputed to be extensive. He represents the America that the half-informed foreigner assumes is the heir to Whitman. People who are given to easy ecstasy can be drugged by the sheer page length of this book to believe it cannot be ignored. It records a life of no real interest, no direction except in the "life" that takes every accident of circumstance as something of value in itself since it

happened to the author. Mr. Dreiser believes that precision hampers and selection castrates. His freedom and intensity are typical of the American gigantomania, from flag-pole sitting to the building of the biggest building in the world, although the only compulsion to build is the desire for an immediate prestige. The building will be only a fraction rented on opening and the structure itself has not even the grace of careful detail.

"I now solemnly cogitated as to whether I should summon my courage and attempt to feel her breasts which showed very full under her dress, and to urge her to sex relations with me or flee." Aside from the experiment in prose style there is no valid excuse for a compensation of adolescent frustration by post-adolescent reconstruction. The interest of memoirs is in the illuminating style, or in the curiosity of the human incident. Here the style is a monument of prolixity and the incident is of an intensity of vulgarity and commonplaceness as to be in itself almost distinguished. Dreiser is so occupied with the weight of his inertia that he can neither stop, nor choose. He sees everything on the plane of his hypnotized stare and everything seen is equally O. K.

As a youth the standards of a primitive Catholic morality did Dreiser very well and their proportionate strictness were commensurate to his power to revolt from them. But revolt he must into the freedom, the liberality of quantitative recollection.

The prestige of an amiable elephant, or whatever it is that makes publishers print books such as this, does nothing to enhance the reputation of the author of *The Genius* or *Sister Carrie*.

V

America can almost be compared to the development of a very attractive and talented youth, who in his late adolescence gives every promise of a creative distinction. His actions indicate a new direction of interest from his ancestry, and his style is fresh and directly distinguished. Then somehow, before he is out of his twenties, so to speak, his activity is accelerated, his capability by virtue of the organization and development of his potential is increased, but somehow the added activity is inert, the acceleration automatic, the nervous spontaneity mechanical. He goes on repeating promises his adolescence made, but in the repetition even the unfulfilled promises are coarsened and rendered meaningless.

The incessant carping of such an attitude that can compare America with the talented young man may irritate to a questioning

answer. One hopes so. After all, one may say, when has it ever been different? Emphatically it has been different and better when a consciousness of the nation's meaning had not yet become a national consciousness, and when there existed something that could approach a national moral order. The increase in population since those happy days and the acceleration and merging of the friction of individual human fallacy seem to have become increasingly inert and obstructive in mass.

Such men as Steffens are good examples of the young man of America. He, at first, helped to make the newspapers potential powers for good, and by his own or parallel incapacity showed how their sensationalism leads only to an increase in daily circulation; the American talent for an incapacity to sustain an interest or direct a force. And Dreiser looms as the gloomy model of too much of America's creative ability, the inert steam-rolling energy which writes an epic of the soul once a year, which builds the highest building in the world every three years and whose only real claim to a place of interest in the chronicles of any years is the depressing quantity of evidence which they pile up to testify to the intrinsic barrenness of all those years.

We at least have our great American humor, the oh yeah that tacitly appraises all the bunk we buy, but which does not stop us from buying it. We have our great American engineering and our ability to create labor-saving devices and eliminate superficial personal discomfort, resulting in economic embarrassment on the one hand and the establishment of false standards of material value on the other. Our political organization, our state "machines", our national policy have given us the mechanical violence of which the fear of war is perhaps the most painful symptom and of which gang anarchy is perhaps the most irritating. Everyone knows this. It's no news. Sure, Americans are the most gifted of the races of somnambulists. They sleep with their eyes open.

The reëstablishment of a moral order might of course, as has been so often proposed, come through Communism. But with the universal standardization of mediocrity and our activity without direction, our repetition of behavior without increase or scope or vision, the "revolution" is very far from us. We have become as profoundly disinterested as an old man who wants to die, only our young bodies still prick us on to a dissolution which is by no means as inevitable as so many of us are willing to imagine.

LINCOLN KIRSTEIN

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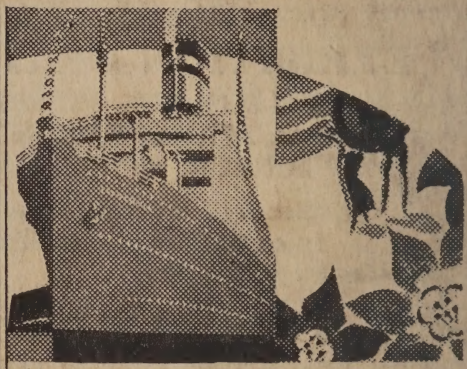

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Lindley Williams Hubbell issued his first book of verse, *Tracing of a Portal*, this spring at the Yale University Press.

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Lincoln Kirstein's first novel "Flesh is Heir" will be published by Brewer, Warren, & Putnam in March.

Marianne Moore was the last managing editor of *The Dial.* Her volume of verse, *Observations*, is published by Lincoln MacVeagh of The Dial Press.

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HOUND & HORN

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THE PURITAN HERESY

A STUDY OF AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGY

THE superiority of Christianity to other religions consisted chiefly in the formulas by which it answered three previously insoluble problems — the problem of communication between the infinite and the finite, the problem of the evil in human nature, and the problem of authority.

No previous religion had successfully bridged the gulf between God and man; to paganism the infinite had been represented by a pantheon of very human personages; Judaism and the more philosophical of the Greeks had made of God an impalpable abstraction. When God was made

worthy of worship he disappeared from the sight of his worshippers; when he was made concrete he also became fallible. It became obvious that some intermediary, some translation of the infinite into concrete terms, was a necessary solution, and Neoplatonism and the mystery cults played with the notion of spirits midway between God and man; the genius of the Christian Fathers found the perfect answer in the mystery of the Incarnation. Catholicism never afterwards forgot that man could not meet the infinite face to face. To St. Thomas the only perfect happiness lay in the intellectual contemplation of the divine essence, but such happiness was impossible in this life; man "is not naturally gifted with the knowledge of truth, as the angels are, but has to gather knowledge from individual things by way of the senses;" in this life the human intelligence could comprehend only concrete particulars and the universals abstracted from them; the intellectual contemplation of the entire cosmos summed in a single all-embracing universal, in other words the vision of God, was possible only when God had united himself to the human intellect in the life beyond the grave; in this life man came nearest to a knowledge of divine things "in dreams and alienations of the bodily senses." Living men, therefore, could know God only by analogy; He was to be approached primarily by way of His revelation of Himself in Jesus Christ and by the sacrifice of the Mass. He must in fact be seen by bodily eyes, through images; He must even be touched and tasted; for it was man's body that was corrupted, and the remedy must correspond to the disease. Inheritors of the Platonic tradition, especially the Greek Fathers, went farther; "whatever is to be regarded as coming within the sphere of the beautiful becomes the character of God," declared Gregory of Nyssa; and since man's intelligence, owing to its weakness, had to be guided "towards the Unseen by stages through the cognizances of the senses," material beauty was "the hand to lead us to the love of the

supernal beauty." The notion that the beautiful was a vehicle of communication between God and man was never accepted unreservedly by the Catholic Church; the monastic reformers, notably St. Bernard, were always opposed to it; but it made possible the use of architecture, painting and music for religious functions; and it justified the dream of the medieval poets that the love of an earthly lady might be transmuted into the love of a beauty beyond fleshly lust and free from change or corruption.

In its answer to the second problem Christianity avoided the opposed perils of pantheism and manichaeism. The religious mind, unguided by tradition, almost invariably succumbs either to the belief that all is divine, hence any impulse is justified, or to the belief that the world of matter is wholly evil, wherefore all effort is useless. Christianity replied that nature was good; evil was something contrary to nature. Evil, moreover, had no real existence; it was something negative, a mere deprivation of natural good. Man desired his own perfection, and did not, however depraved he might be, wish for evil; every inclination was to something good. He had, however, been corrupted by sin; the order of nature had been destroyed; intellect, will and appetite were all partially blinded, and in consequence man sought his spiritual happiness among temporal goods instead of satisfying his physical appetites in accordance with divine law and finding his happiness in God. Nothing could save him but the grace of God, a grace given not because of man's efforts or deserts but freely bestowed by God on those whom by His inscrutable will He had elected. By operating grace the wills of the predestinate were changed; henceforth they loved God and His law; this was an instantaneous change wrought by God upon man's free will; it could, however, be forfeited by mortal sin; and there was no certain method of determining whether one had or had not truly received it. Then, by coöperating grace, man was assisted in works of

righteousness and slowly cleansed of the disease of sin; it was these works of righteousness which would be rewarded with salvation. The religious life was therefore a progress, which would be continued in purgatory. In this answer to the problem of evil all the Christian theologians were in essential agreement. St. Augustine, in controversy with the Pelagians, was driven to extreme assertions of man's depravity; but in his more characteristic writings he declared, like St. Thomas and the Greek Fathers, that nature was good, that sin was a privation of good, that man desired only what was good, and that the human will was free. St. Thomas, as well as St. Augustine, declared that man was saved only by the free grace of God and that "why He chooses some for glory, and reprobates others, has no reason, except the Divine Will;" God, he said, prepared "unequal lots for not unequal things."

The answer of Christianity to the problem of authority was that the vehicle for interpreting God's will to man was the Church. Christianity successfully avoided the error of Judaism and Mohammedanism in vesting supreme authority in a written book. These two religions came to consist primarily in a blind obedience to a rigid code of laws; whereas Christianity was always an attitude of mind and heart, and its consequences in practice were interpreted to meet differing problems and situations by a living organism. The Bible was the word of God, but from the beginning the sanction of its divine origin was the decree of the Church, and it was for the Church to interpret its meaning. Christianity, therefore, had almost limitless elasticity and possibilities of development.

2

The Puritan heresy consisted in a denial of these three solutions. Two streams united in its formulation.

The first, dating back to the later middle ages, sprang

from a discontent with the wickedness of the priesthood. Despairing of reform, the rebels rejected altogether the authority of the Church and, seeking some other vehicle expressing God's will, turned instead to the Bible, where they read commandments very different from any preached by pope or cardinal. But how was the Bible known to be the word of God? The Spirit Himself testified to its truth in the heart of a true believer, declared Wyclif and the Lollards, and the true believer, without learning or ability, could infallibly interpret its meaning. There must, therefore, be a clear line between those who had received the Spirit and those who had not, and the ultimate authority was not in reality the Bible but the Spirit's secret witness. Lollardry, in its final formulation, was identical with the later Puritanism.

Puritanism's other ancestor was Luther, a master-spirit whose religious experience became a standard for three centuries. Luther, as M. Maritain shows, demanded a certainty of redemption, such as Catholicism had never promised, and he sought it not by relying on the satisfaction made by Christ but by works. In consequence he despaired, and in his despair he saw a light. Man, he said, was utterly wicked; "the spiritual powers have been not only corrupted by sin, but absolutely destroyed; so that there is now nothing in them but a depraved reason and a will that is the enemy and opponent of God, whose only thought is war against God;" the human reason was "blind and dark," "the whore of the devil;" it could "only blaspheme and dishonor everything God has said or done." Man being utterly wicked, no coöperation was possible between grace and nature; those whom God elected he sanctified not with their aid but in their own despite, and any good works which resulted were the work of God alone; "true piety, piety of value in God's eyes, is found in works which are foreign to us, not in our own." Moreover, if salvation depended solely on God's election, it could never be forfeited by man, and man might

know with certainty whether or not he had been chosen; in fact conversion consisted not in a change of heart but in an intimation and an assurance that one's sins had been forgiven; Christianity, said Luther, "is nothing but a continual exercise in feeling that you have no sin."

Luther's experience was formulated into a system by Calvin.

For Calvin the only authority was the Bible. But the sanction of the Bible — and also the instrument of its interpretation — was not human reason. "The testimony of the Spirit is superior to reason;" and after receiving that testimony "we no longer believe, either on our own judgment or that of others, that the Scriptures are from God; but in a way superior to human judgment feel perfectly assured — as much so as if we beheld the divine image visibly impressed on it — that it came to us, by the instrumentality of men, from the very mouth of God." In fact "it is just the same as if it were asked, How shall we learn to distinguish light from darkness, white from black, sweet from bitter."

With hard words for all the Fathers and the Scholastics, and occasional approval only for St. Augustine and St. Bernard, Calvin went on to explain the difference between those who had received the Spirit and those who had not. The natural man was wholly wicked; "the whole man, from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, is so deluged, as it were, that no part remains exempt from sin;" "in Divine things our reason is totally blind and stupid, . . . a kind of veil, by which the mind is prevented from a discovery of God;" "all the desires of men are evil." Psychological distinctions between will and appetite, reason and instinct, were a mere waste of labor; the carnal man was a simple creature, without inner conflicts, who ran "headlong into sin with the approbation and consent of the whole soul." God, however, had chosen some for salvation, a choice which man had no liberty to reject since his coöperation was not required;

and to those whom He had chosen He gave a certain imtimation of his choice; the faith by which man was saved was, according to Calvin, "a steady and certain knowledge of the Divine benevolence towards us, which, being founded on the truth of the gratuitous promise in Christ, is both revealed to our minds, and confirmed to our hearts, by the Holy Spirit;" "no man," he continued, "is truly a believer unless . . . he feels an undoubted expectation of salvation," "this inward calling is an infallible pledge of salvation." Inward calling was followed by good works, but these works were done by the Spirit and not by man; man, for the first time, became a seat of conflict, a conflict between grace and nature; God, however, "requires nothing from us, which is to be done by our attention and diligence;" he cleansed his elect without their coöperation. Moreover, the only pledge of election was the inner assurance; nature continued to sin, and "if it must be determined by our works how the Lord is affected toward us, I admit we cannot attain this object even by a very slight conjecture."

Having thus destroyed the very core of the Catholic doctrine of grace and nature, Calvin clinched the new structure with two equally revolutionary corollaries. He ignored the traditional psychology of conversion; conversion had meant a coming to love God, so that the convert obeyed God willingly instead of suffering repression from the Law; but for Calvin righteousness meant obedience, a blind obedience to God's inscrutable will in which love was of slight importance. And having destroyed free will, Calvin went on to preach uncompromising determinism; God was directly responsible for every event; the purpose of God in allowing evil, and the relationship between a good creator and his evil creatures were mysteries; it was blasphemous for man to judge or question his Maker. This determinism is often ascribed to St. Augustine; but whatever he may occasionally have written in controversy, it was inconsistent with the main drift of his

thought; all the Catholic theologians had affirmed free will and allowed an element of contingence among natural events; this did not destroy God's foreknowledge, because God was in eternity and not in time; Calvin, who asserted that foreknowledge implied determinism, seems to have lacked philosophical intelligence for such a notion.

The essence of Calvinism was a belief in direct communication between God and the individual soul; intermediaries and analogies were therefore unnecessary; this development was emphasized by the prohibition of graven images found in the Bible, and by the hostility to the priesthood, whose power was founded on the miracle of transubstantiation. God and man were brought close together; translation of the infinite into matter was unnecessary, and the sacraments were reduced to mere external signs; images were destroyed, and aesthetic pleasure ceased to be an instrument leading man to God; an attempt was made to subtract from religious services everything for which clear sanction could not be found in the New Testament. The spirit behind the Calvinist opposition to images was expressed very clearly by Milton; true religion, he declared, did not need "the weak, and fallible office of the Senses, to be either the Ushers, or Interpreters of heavenly Mysteries;" Catholics tried to "make God earthly and fleshy, because they could not make themselves heavenly and Spirituall."

3

Calvin gave to the elements of all Protestantism a logical and coherent shape, and for nearly half a century it seemed as though England would become Calvinist. Elizabeth's archbishops accepted his theology; the Puritans with whom they argued were those more consistent Calvinists who claimed that scripture was an all-sufficient authority for church government as well as for doctrine. Not till the end of the sixteenth century did Hooker succeed in defining a creed

for the Anglican Church. That creed was obviously a compromise. Hooker accepted the supremacy of the Bible; its sanction was partly rational argument, partly the secret witness of the Spirit; he declared, however, that no system of church government could be deduced from it, and claimed that such matters should be left to reason, guided by tradition. Otherwise he gave no encouragement to Puritanism; he upheld very fully and clearly the Thomist conceptions of nature and grace; and though he did not admit transubstantiation, he declared that the sacraments were vehicles of grace and pleaded eloquently for the use of material aids in the worship of an infinite God.

Henceforth battle was joined on the field of theology as well as of church government. By an extraordinary miracle the bastard makeshift of an atheist queen became a focus for national loyalty and inspired the eloquence of a remarkable series of preachers and theologians. Puritanism survived only as the creed of a minority. It had, however, a clear field for development in New England; and it is there that its practical application can be examined most clearly. Its immediate consequences were disastrous; and having no strong vitality or seeds for development it grew steadily weaker, split into fragments, and finally died, destroying in its death the last remnants in New England of European Christian tradition.

Calvinism could not be accepted without one important alteration. Calvin's doctrine of grace was suited only to mystics and enthusiastics; it might easily be perverted into a justification of all manner of immoralities. The Puritans were plain blunt men with little taste for mysticism and no talent for speculation. A new conception was formulated by English theologians, of whom William Ames was the most influential. The sign of election was not an inner assurance; it was a sober decision to trust in Christ and obey God's law. Those who made this sober decision might feel reasonably confident that they had received God's grace; but the surest proof of

it was its fruit in conduct; complete assurance was impossible. It was assumed that all was the work of grace; it was God, without human coöperation, who caused the sober decision to be made. But in actual practice this doctrine had the effect of unduly magnifying man's ability to save himself, as much as Calvin's conception had unduly minimized it; conversion was merely a choice to obey a certain code of rules, and did not imply any emotional change, any love for God or for holiness, or any genuinely religious experience; religion in other words was reduced to mere morality.

The battle between these two conceptions was fought out after the colonization. John Cotton, who except for the outcast Roger Williams was the only New Englander before Edwards with any trace of mystical feeling, preached Calvinism; his colleagues, of whom only Shepard and Hooker seem to have been sufficiently clearheaded to understand the points at issue, preached the moralism of Ames. When Cotton's parishioner, Anne Hutchinson, underlined the differences and caused a tumult, the rulers of the colony frightened Cotton into abandoning his disciples, branded them as "antinomians" who condoned licentiousness, and drove them into exile. On the real point at issue — whether forgiveness of sins preceded conversion or was its consequence, whether in other words conversion was an assurance of election or a decision to obey God — Cotton never changed his opinion; but he lacked the stamina for rebellion, and his beliefs were condemned as heretical. Sanctioned by Calvin and logically implied in many doctrines still preached by the more muddleheaded of the orthodox party, they survived underground and burst out with violence a century later. Meanwhile — and in eastern Massachusetts for ever after — religion became morality.

Otherwise Calvinism was swallowed whole. The unconverted man was wicked, in will and desire as well as in appetite and act. Since he was naturally God's enemy he

could be appealed to only through fear, fear of God's anger in this world and of hellfire in the next; to Calvin fear was used by God to prepare the sinner for conversion, to Ames it was the chief motive for obedience. Hellfire sermons in the middle ages had been lurid enough; but never before had terror of punishment been the only reason for goodness.

In the Catholic Church the religious life had been a progressive cleansing of the desires; man's affections had been diverted from temporal goods until they finally came to rest in the love of God. But the Puritans, following Calvin, regarded religion not as a progress but as a condition; it was an instantaneous change, dividing the sheep from the goats. After the defeat of antinomianism it meant obedience to an external code — a code to be found in the Bible, most explicitly in the Pentateuch. There was no cleansing of the desires, because the desires were wholly evil and goodness was an unnatural condition; virtue was no longer nature purified by grace; it consisted no longer in a harmony of the appetites and desires with divine law — a harmony gradually achieved by discipline; it became cerebral instead of instinctive; the good man was good not because his natural instincts had been healed but because he obeyed an external code. Moreover, though the morality of the Pentateuch was in some instances very severe, notably against disobedience to parents and sexual abnormality, it did not forbid any normal physical pleasure; if its rules were obeyed there was no necessity for further discipline; unnecessary asceticism was, in fact, severely discouraged. Calvin himself pointed out that it was not forbidden "to laugh, or to be full, or to add new to old and hereditary possessions, or to be delighted with music, or to drink wine." There were no saints in New England; there was marrying and begetting of children, seeking of riches and enjoyment of food and wine, even for those who might have preferred celibacy and seclusion.

God, in New England, spoke personally to His elect, and

there was no need for intermediaries or concrete analogies. The Puritans were very close to God; God informed them of His will by giving them impulses and suggesting to them scripture texts; He sometimes informed them of future events. The chief importance of Jesus Christ was no longer that He revealed God to man but that He bore man's sins; emphasis shifted from the Incarnation to the Atonement. This juxtaposition of God and man exalted man and degraded God; the Puritans grew self-righteous, and God, no longer an inscrutable first principle, became a very concrete Mosaic Jehovah; He was forever-rewarding the righteous and punishing the wicked. Moreover, since all was predestined and nothing contingent, accident was impossible; casting lots became a method of discovering God's will; games of chance were blasphemous, and misfortune was an indication of divine disapproval.

Loss of the Catholic principle of analogy had an even more disastrous consequence; it meant the divorce of art from religion. The Puritans believed that after conversion they knew God directly, like St. Thomas's angels, and, as they fondly imagined, spiritually; concrete representations and symbolisms were unnecessary. There was nothing wrong about aesthetic pleasure; but it was not an instrument leading man to God; and man being a simple creature without higher or lower elements, it was not superior to other kinds of pleasure. So art was banished from the worship of God; in New England there were no religious images or paintings, the religious music was unutterably dreary, and the architecture of the meeting-houses only achieved a certain charm, austere and unadorned, because of the instinctive good taste of New England craftsmen. Forbidden to express religious beliefs and intuitions and deprived of their noblest justification, music and painting languished; poetry was cultivated because, being less obviously a matter of concrete images than painting, it could handle sacred themes; but since no Puritan

might submit himself to his natural instincts, it was intolerably prosaic; in England, meanwhile, the Puritans ruined music and dancing, and planned to tear down the cathedrals. Enjoyment of natural beauty suffered similarly; except in one poem by Anne Bradstreet there is not a trace before Edwards of any appreciation of the New England countryside, except such appreciation as a farmer, a hunter, or an industrial exploiter might display; and sexual love wholly lost its transcendental significance and became a mere partnership in child bearing.

To the supremacy of the Bible and the supposed ability of every believer to interpret it for himself must be ascribed the gritty individualism of the New England temperament. Adherence to an external code and not to an attitude of mind interpreted by an authoritative church resulted in a loss of suppleness, a refusal to compromise; if God's will was written down in black and white, it must at any cost be obeyed. Each inhabitant of New England believed that he knew God's will; and the annals of its parishes are an unending series of quarrels. In the first generation ministerial influence predominated, because ministerial interpretations of scripture were plausible; also because the ministers could partly control the admissions to church membership, and because heretics were banished. Afterwards every man was his own pope, and any influence the ministers had was based on tact, geniality and political cleverness. It had been a Protestant dogma from the beginning that the Bible must be taken literally; Catholics had evaded the crudity of parts of the Old Testament by interpreting them as symbols and prophecies of Christianity; Calvinism, accepting every part of Scripture as the word of God, found justifications of bloodshed and cruelty. Heresies were numerous; every heretic could quote scripture to his purpose; orthodox champions could reply only by marshalling texts and by observing how suggestions to heresy, sternly banished from conscious consideration,

leapt into their own minds with the same diabolical violence and unseasonableness as temptations to immorality.

4

For a century the official creed of New England was frozen hard; it believed that religion meant choosing to do good; it professed to believe in doctrines of divine election and redemption which were utterly inconsistent. Nobody dared to clarify the confusion; while it lasted there was not, within the New England Churches, a single new or living thought.

In 1740 came a cataclysm — the Great Awakening; the oratory of the English George Whitefield and the Scotch-Irish Gilbert Tennent — both of them old-fashioned Calvinists and the latter a lurid preacher of hellfire — caused many thousands of sudden and violent conversions; there were wild orgies of mob emotion, unexampled since the middle ages. For those who accepted the revival orthodox New England Puritanism was impossible; religion was not a sober choice; it was a violent something, which descended upon them, in their own despite, from on high, revolutionizing their lives. After the Awakening there was a schism. Thousands of "separatists" formed new churches, in which Calvinism was preached in its original purity; conversion meant an assurance of election; it was an intimation of divine choice, in which human coöperation was unnecessary. The logical end of Calvinism, fear of which had caused the first generation to banish the antinomians, was brought considerably nearer. Some of the separatists were guilty of sexual immorality — in one case even of murder; others declared that, having been chosen by God, they were now perfect and sinless, some adding that they had passed the second death and were now immortal; two of them, altogether abandoning themselves to the crazy fancies which leapt into their brains, announced themselves as reincarnations of the Son of Man. Separatist meetings were conducted with the

utmost disorder, every brother and sister being allowed to sing or pray or exhort precisely as the spirit moved them.

The Awakening stimulated the younger New England ministers to reconsider the traditional beliefs. A large proportion of them, still clinging to a religion of sober choice, fell under the influence of Locke, whose denial of innate ideas implied a denial of original sin, and of the English Presbyterians, many of whom had already become Unitarian. More cautiously, and without the slightest trace of originality, the New Englanders followed them along the same path. If religion meant choosing to do good, then supernatural grace was unnecessary; man could save himself, and there was no original sin. If there was no original sin, then mankind was not estranged from God and the atonement made by Jesus was unnecessary. The incarnation having been implicitly rendered unnecessary by the original Puritans, there was no longer any reason for considering Jesus as God; he was a teacher of moral virtue, at first a creature something more than human, finally as the last shreds of mystery dissolved in smoke and nothing but a name and a memory survived from traditional Christianity, a mere man. This process, beginning in the seventeen forties, occupied about a century. Every fresh stage in the dissolution was justified by scripture; from Mayhew down to Channing each clergyman, as he destroyed the next link in the chain of dogma, claimed merely to be interpreting scripture more truly than his predecessors. But when finally the whole structure had gone scripture also was rejected; it followed original sin and hellfire and supernatural grace and the divinity of Jesus on to the bonfire; the secret witness of the spirit could not survive supernatural grace, and in the eighteen forties the notion, accepted by Channing, that human reason proved scripture to be divine, began to be destroyed by German criticism. All that remained was a vague assurance of divine benevolence, and a moral code whose only sanction was custom.

Meanwhile there had been an attempt to escape from the dilemmas presented by Calvinism. Jonathan Edwards, the only original thinker produced by orthodox Puritanism in New England, had taken part in the Great Awakening and had observed both the disorders of separatism and the drift in eastern Massachusetts towards Unitarianism. The former had been caused by Calvin's notion that conversion meant an assurance of election, and the latter by the New England doctrine that conversion meant a sober choice; between these two conceptions Edwards found a via media.

Edwards was susceptible, as no other New Englander had ever been, to aesthetic pleasure; he refers frequently in his writings to the colors of a landscape, the sound of music, the symmetry of the human form, the odor of flowers, the sweet taste of honey; to be alone among the woods or on a hilltop, watching a thunderstorm or the movement of clouds, gave him a mystic sense of all-pervading divinity. God, for him, meant beauty, and after his conversion this beauty was chiefly moral beauty. Accepting the Calvinist framework, he declared that natural man, completely wicked, had never seen this moral beauty and was, therefore, unable to appreciate it; but to those whom He had elected for salvation God displayed the loveliness of His moral perfections and having once beheld it they were irresistibly drawn to love it and desire it beyond all things. Here was an explanation of conversion which neither destroyed human coöperation, as Calvinism had done, nor implied, like orthodox New England Puritanism, that man was free to save himself; it was not Catholic; but it was watertight in theory and it worked in practise.

Edwards also remedied Calvin's refusal to justify God's ways to man; he did not regard the divine will as inscrutable and not to be questioned. The universe he declared — again thinking mainly in aesthetic categories — was a place of contrast; evil was balanced against good and misery against happiness; light could not exist without darkness, and the

intenser the darkness the more vivid the light; every atom, good or bad, contributed to the beauty of the whole. All had been created by God; but God was not the author of evil because evil had no real existence; it was an absence of good, a negation; God had withdrawn his light from a part of the universe in order that he might shine more brightly on the remainder.

These were valuable improvements to the orthodox structure; but elsewhere Edwards only perpetuated its deficiencies. He declared with unprecedented violence that the natural man was utterly depraved in all his desires and faculties; and in his "Freedom of the Will" he used his superb capacity for argumentation with a most perverse incomprehension of the real question at issue. The liberal clergy, like Pelagius thirteen centuries before, were declaring that man could save himself; Edwards, not realizing that, like Augustine, he must prove the necessity of supernatural grace, proved instead that all man's actions were predetermined; following Calvin, he expressly identified will and desire, and declared that the will always followed the strongest motive; in other words, man was not a soul in a body, for whom goodness consisted in an ordered harmony of will, intellect and appetite; he was a bundle of reactions, which God sometimes cleansed by implanting a desire for goodness. Edwards claimed to have proved that man could not save himself but must call on God to save him; three generations later it had become obvious that a belief in determinism was merely a philosophical theory which could have no effect on conduct; it did not therefore encourage a practical belief in divine grace.

It is fascinating to think of what Edwards might have become in a Catholic environment. His belief that natural beauty was the self-revelation of God was Catholic; yet he never seems to have felt a need for knowing God through analogies; as a mystic he could commune with Him directly. It is obvious from his personal narrative that his own ex-

perience did not correspond with what he preached; before his conversion he was not utterly depraved and he knew it; sense of sin came to him afterwards; he was drawn to God by love of beauty, not frightened away from evil by fear of hell; it was, he says, five years before he ceased to be puzzled by this discrepancy; his experience of religion had been Catholic and not Calvinist. Whence he derived his ideas we do not know; they were unique in New England, but not in Christendom; his conception of God as beauty and evil as a negation of good belonged to the Catholic tradition; his doctrine of contrast, though foreign to St. Thomas (for whom the universe was a feudal hierarchy, man falling into place between the angels and the animals) can be found in St. Augustine.

Edwards had little influence in his lifetime, but within half a century of his death his followers had become the strongest party in the New England churches. Bellamy and Hopkins, Emmons and Smalley, Dwight and the younger Edwards preached and developed their master's ideas; and gifted orators, the chief of them being Asahel Nettleton, impressed them upon the laity. Between 1798 and 1858 there was a series of revivals, at intervals of not more than half a dozen years, the smallest of which numbered its converts in many thousands; these stirrings had no connection with the wild convulsions in the west; they were passionate but at the same time orderly, and they caused a conspicuous tightening in morality. By these revivals Connecticut, parts of which in 1750 had been almost as liberal as Boston, was completely won over to Edwardean Calvinism, and Unitarianism was confined to eastern Massachusetts. Some of the evil effects of earlier Puritanism were avoided; Edwards' logic was so intoxicating that, though the Bible was still supreme authority, there were no heresies or schisms; and in spite of the belief in direct communication between God and man, nobody had trances or believed himself inspired or a prophet

of future events. On the other hand the emphasis on strict morality was greater than before. The converts did not merely obey God, they loved Him; but forbidden the use of concrete images, they were compelled to think of God not as beauty or as the end of human desire but as morality; and since Edwardean Christianity meant love and not obedience, the austerities which a good Christian, in his passion for moral holiness and purity might impose upon himself were not limited by the words of the Pentateuch. The new puritanism far exceeded in severity the puritanism of the first three generations; it forbade drinking, dancing and playing games; smoking ceased among women and was discouraged among men; in the great revivals led by Nettleton and his associates any convert who did not sign a pledge of total abstinence and who still went to dances was treated as not truly converted and expelled from membership of the church.

Edwardean Calvinism did not disintegrate from internal causes, like its predecessor; it was the one-hoss-shay which had no internal defects. In the nineteenth century it began to seem impossible. God had made men who were mere puppets in His hands; the majority of them, deliberately left by him in darkness, would for the expression of His attributes and the aesthetic perfection of the universe be condemned to eternal torment. This nightmare was fantastic. The Yale theologians, Timothy Dwight and then Nathaniel Taylor, slowly modified it; they declared that God was benevolent, that his love for mankind was prior to his love for justice; Edwards's belief in complete determinism was transmuted into a belief in complete free will, the need for supernatural grace being lost in the process. In the later decades of the nineteenth century, in the sermons of Henry Ward Beecher, was elaborated a God of all-pervading love. In essentials the school of Edwards had gone the way of Channing; they declared that God wished well for all mankind, that religion meant choosing to do good, and that man

was free to save himself; the dogmas, verbally adhered to, of original sin, the divinity of Jesus, and the atonement had no effect on practise.

Thus, once the Catholic solution to the problem of nature and grace had been denied, no plausible substitute could be found; and the puritan heresy ended in the complete disappearance of Christianity as a *religion;* it survived as the name of a practical philosophy deduced from the recorded words of Jesus Christ.

The centre of this philosophy is the idea that God is benevolent. This persistent confidence that the bright side of things is the only right side, this dogmatic optimism, is possible only for those who, like the early Boston Unitarians, live a very sheltered life. Out in the great world it is by no means certain that all is for the best in the best of universes; as Edwards had been at pains to point out, the evil inherent in things is so overwhelming that an angry God is the only plausible explanation; to him the sufferings and deaths of innocent children from smallpox and diphtheria were a sufficient proof that God was not benevolent; from biology the nineteenth century was to learn still more of nature's cruelty. Those who lack a religious faith which accepts and explains the misery of God's creatures with few exceptions either shut their eyes and ears to unpleasant facts or succumb to a Manicheean despair.

While both orthodox Calvinism and the Edwardean revision were descending to a dead-level of facile optimism, the other fragment into which Puritanism had disintegrated obeyed a different impetus. The separatists believed in election, assurance, and divine inspiration; their organization survived only for seventy years, but their principles were inherited and carried to their reductio ad absurdum by a litter of sects. Each of the sects began because somebody felt strange impulses which, scorning guidance from reason or tradition, he interpreted as of divine origin; even the founder

of Mormonism seems at first to have been honestly self-deluded. Occasionally, as with William Miller, there was a claim to an inspired interpretation of scripture, but usually scripture was wholly overshadowed by the impulses of the spirit. The Osgoodites, for example, a New Hampshire sect, added to the worship of Jesus a detestation of soldiers, magistrates, lawyers, orthodox clergymen, doctors, female reformers, Whig politicians, slavery abolitionists, teetotalers, smokers of tobacco, and builders of railroads, all of whom were solemnly consigned to hell in hymns sung at their meetings; the Cochranites, in Maine, allowed sexual immorality, swore like pirates, and had certain peculiarly impolite methods of showing their contempt for mere formalism.

The strongest tendency among all the sects was towards perfectionism — the notion that after conversion God's elect were not merely forgiven their sins, but were actually sinless and perfect. This was the obvious consequence of Luther's and Calvin's conception of grace, and it had appeared in sixteenth-century Germany and in seventeenth-century England. In New England the Shakers and the disciples of Noyes were the most conspicuous examples. Sexual desire, being uncontrollable by the will, has always been the chief proof of sin; the Shaker solution was complete chastity, while Noyes preached sexual communism. The same error was responsible for the foundation of colonies; all the colonizers believed that perfection was easily obtainable, not necessarily through the grace of God, but always by some simple panacea which would separate the sheep from the goats; they did not realize that owing to the corruption of human nature the good life is a progress whose end can not be achieved on this side of the grave.

5

Edwards had tried to harmonize Puritanism with religious experience as he knew it and had seen it; the transcendental-

ist problem a century later was to make it compatible with the good life. Edwards had ended by making the edifice even narrower and more stifling than before; transcendentalism, unable to reform it or to rebuild it on more Catholic lines, could only destroy it; it was an end, not a beginning.

The ideas of transcendentalism may be defined as Edwardean Calvinism modified by European romanticism, French and German. Everywhere the rediscovery of man's natural self and the doctrine of natural goodness were like a thunderstorm in a time of drought; but nowhere were the refreshing streams received more gratefully than in New England. Young men began to read Rousseau and Chateaubriand, to notice the beauties of the countryside, to cultivate their emotions and enjoy romantic friendships. In New England the new doctrine had to be formulated in religious terms in order to be understood; and the necessary formulation was supplied by German transcendental philosophy — or rather by that philosophy as interpreted in Coleridge's "Aids to Reflection" and reinterpreted in the preface which James March added to its American edition. The transcendentalists asserted that there was direct communication, without material or concrete intermediaries, not merely between God and those elect persons who had received His grace, but between God and all human beings who listened to the voice of intuition; denying Locke's sensationalism, they believed in the existence of innate ideas, by virtue of which "the whole of one side of the soul of man lay open to the spiritual and the ideal," to "entities that have no relation to time and place and condition." Sin was "the difficulty and obstruction which the Infinite meets with in entering into the finite"; it had no real existence, being "not essential but modal." Regeneration was God's entry into the soul, and the more fully God entered into the soul, the more holy did the soul become and the more harmonious with God. Man, therefore, had to listen to the voice of God within him;

his heart was an oracle; he must be exhorted to "trust her instinctive auguries, obey her divine leadings." "We all of us border close upon God. He shines through, into each pure soul, as the sun through the circumambient air." The transcendentalist deity was pantheist, and nature especially was his revelation; "the love of nature ends in the love of God," for "beauty is the revelation of the soul to the senses."

This may have been German philosophy but it was also puritanism. While reading Emerson and Thoreau one is conscious always of a background of New England farmers — humorless, self-contained men, intent on finding their own salvation without guidance from authority, accustomed to an unbending insistence on their rights against ministers, town meetings, tax collectors and royal governors. The spirit of New England speaks when Emerson declares that "I see no reason why I should bow my head to man, or cringe in my demeanor," or when Thoreau says that "Men are very generally spoiled by being so civil and well-disposed — A cross man, a coarse man, an eccentric man, a silent man, a man who does not drill well — of him there is some hope." It is as if Cincinnatus had found a voice. Almost all the ideas of transcendentalism can be found in Edwards. Edwards also found God in nature; Edwards also saw in beauty the revelation of the soul to the senses; the transcendentalist voice of God in the intuition of the heart is merely Edwards' "divine and supernatural light, immediately imparted to the soul by the spirit of God," extended from the elect minority to the human race as a whole. The philosophy of Emerson in particular is wholly Edwardean, though he seems to have absorbed ideas which Edwards had put into circulation rather than to have studied Edwards himself. Emerson's principle of compensation is merely Edwards' principle of contrast under another name; it first appears in his journals as "that principle of contrast which we find engraven within" and is explained as due to "the intentions of Providence to limit

human perfectibility and to bind together good and evil, like life and death, by indissoluble connection." Equally Edwardean was Emerson's belief that the universe was a single tightly-knit system in which each atom played an indispensable part; "scarce an infant or idiot exists who can not somehow or other contribute to the well-being of the universe," he said, just as Edwards had preached that even the damned contributed to the beauty of God's creation. A corollary was the doctrine that the whole universe could be known from any part of it, a doctrine which encouraged Emerson to "talk of chemangoes and my new garden sprout . . . and never a word of Goethe and Tennyson" — and Thoreau to fill volumes of his journal with observations of simple natural events in Walden.

But if the transcendentalists were the heirs of Puritanism, they altered it, in a misdirected attempt to remedy its deficiencies, so radically that it scarcely survived them.

They could no longer accept the Bible as God's unique revelation; not the Bible alone but all great books, Pagan and Buddhist as well as Hebrew, ranked as scripture. What remained was the habit of seeking authority in written words, and the principle of personal inspiration, the secret witness of the Spirit in the hearts of men.

They could no longer draw a line between the saved and the damned; they did not believe that a majority of the human race, including many obviously wise and philanthropic, were completely wicked in thought, word, and deed. But they clung to the Puritan conception of grace; it was still the voice of God in the heart, to which man need only listen; they extended its operations from the elect to the human race as a whole; "enthusiasm," they declared "was the glory and hope of the world"; enthusiasm was the voice of God. They did not realize that all men were partly good and partly wicked, and that the religious life was a progress in which grace coöperated with nature; for them there was little need for discipline or

effort; man should only listen and obey. It followed that perfection in this world was not impossible; here transcendentalism came close to the sects; Bronson Alcott, walking across the hills from Fruitlands, could find kindred dreamers among the Shakers. The effect was to justify any impulse; Emerson almost became the prophet of big business; he came near to condoning any immorality if it had enthusiasm behind it. Of the two opposite heresies to which the loss of the Catholic doctrine of grace and nature inevitably leads, the transcendentalists, secure in their snug New England villages, chose pantheism; later generations, more exposed to the cruelty and chaos of the phenomenal world, would prefer manicheeism.

The third facet of the Puritan heresy was its refusal to allow intermediaries between God and man. The effect was not only to exalt man but to degrade God; God had been too often merely the angry old man of Hebrew legend. The transcendentalists made God a deity worthy of their worship; he became the all-pervading essence, the invisible principle of beauty and truth, the author of goodness. But retaining the Puritan prejudice against images, and inheriting no accepted set of symbols, they could find no satisfactory means of bridging the gulf between God and the concrete world; at one extreme they found Him everywhere, revealing Himself in all the beauties of nature and all the masterpieces of art; at the other He was merely a set of abstract principles bearing no relation to the exigencies of practical life. The pantheist God can not be thought of; God can only be thought of by means of specific symbols which are believed to embody His essence and suggest divine things with particular appropriateness; the transcendentalists had no such symbols; and so their God, like Edwards's God, was abstract morality. As Mr. Van Wyck Brooks has remarked, Emerson's culture had "entered wholly through the brain in the form of general propositions, without any checking from observation or

experience"; he is "abstract at the wrong times and concrete at the wrong times, he has so little sense of the relation between the abstract and the concrete." Ideal and practise were divorced when the transcendentalists made God worthy of worship without making it possible to worship Him. The same critic remarks of the modern American, the heir of the Puritan tradition, that "the theoretical atmosphere in which he has lived bears no relation to society, the practical atmosphere in which he has lived bears no relation to ideals"; "human nature itself exists in America on two irreconcilable planes, the plane of stark theory and the plane of stark business."

After transcendentalism there was nothing. The Puritan heresy had burnt itself out; no educated man could any longer believe its fantastic theology. It had left scars: a refusal to accept authority; a tendency to obey impulse as the voice of God; a worship of enthusiasm; a willingness to fancy that perfection was not impossible in this world; a belief that the will was bound and that the soul was a mere bundle of reactions. Nor were these relics confined to New England; the framework of American life was built by Calvinists—English, Dutch, and Scotch-Irish; the civil war destroyed the only large community which stood, in part, for different attitudes. But the faith was gone. The founders of "The Dial" had imagined that they were tearing down a prison; the next generation, finding themselves without shelter in a chilling void, began to shiver. The heir of Emerson was Henry Adams, who turned away from the barren chaos of American life to the certainties of Dante and St. Thomas; and after Henry Adams came T. S. Eliot who not only admired the lost traditions of Catholicism from a distance but made a heroic attempt to recapture them.

HENRY BAMFORD PARKES

1919

COMING OF AGE

when the telegram came that she was dying (the streetcarwheels screeched round the bellglass like all the slatepencils on all the slates in all the schools) walking around Fresh Pond the smell of puddlewater willowbuds in the raw wind shrieking streetcarwheels rattling on loose trucks through the Boston suburbs Grief isn't a uniform and go shock the Booch and drink wine for supper at the Lenox before catching the Federal

I'm so tired of violets
Take them all away

when the telegram came that she was dying the bellglass cracked in a screech of slatepencils (Have you ever never been able to sleep for a week in April?) and He met me in the grey trainshed my eyes were stinging with vermillion bronze and chromegreen inks that oozed from the spinning April hills His moustaches were white the tired droop of an old man's cheeks She's gone Jack Grief isnt a uniform and the in the parlor the waxen odor of lilies in the parlor (He and I we must bury the uniform of grief)

then the riversmell the shimmering Potomac reaches the

little choppysilver waves at Indian Head there were mockingbirds in the graveyard and the roadsides steamed with spring April enough to shock the world

when the cable came that He was dead I walked through the streets full of fiveoclock madrileño madness shivered cubes of aguardiente redwine gaslampgreen sunsetpink tileochre eyes lips red cheeks brown pillar of the throat climbed on the night train at the Norte Station without knowing why

I'm so tired of violets
Take them all away

the shattered iridescent bellglass the carefully copied busts the architectural details the grammar of styles

it was the end of that book and I left the Oxford poets in the little noisy room that smelt of stale oliveoil in the Pension Boston Ahora now maintenant vita nuova but we

who had heard Copey's beautiful reading voice and read the handsomely bound books and breathed deep (breath deep *one two three four*) of the waxwork lilies and the artificial parmaviolet scent under the ethercone and sat breakfasting in the library where the bust was of Octavius

were now dead at the cableoffice

on the rumblebumping wooden bench on the train slamming through midnight climbing up from the steerage to get a whiff of Atlantic on the lunging steamship (the ovalfaced Swiss girl and her husband were my friends she had slightly popeyes and a little gruff way of saying *Zut alors* and throwing us a little smile a fish to a sealion that warmed our darkness) when the immigration officer came for her passport he couldnt send her to Ellis Island la grippe espagnole she was dead

washing those windows

K. P.

cleaning the sparkplugs with a pocketknife

A. W. O. L.

grinding the American Beauty roses to dust in that whore's bed (the foggy night flamed with proclamations of the League of the Rights of Man) the almond smell of high explosives sending singing éclats through the sweetish puking grandiloquence of the rotting dead

tomorrow I hoped would be the first day of the first month of the first year

IMMORTAL

the raindrops fall one by one out of the horsechestnut tree over the arbor onto the table and the puddly gravel of the abandoned beergarden and my clipped skull where my fingers move gently forward and back over the fuzzy knobs and hollows

spring and we've just been swimming in the Marne way off somewhere beyond the fat clouds on the horizon they are hammering on a tin roof in the rain in the spring after a swim in the Marne with that hammering to the north pounding the thought of death into our ears

the winey thought of death stings in the spring blood that throbs in the sunburned neck up and down the belly under the tight belt hurries like cognac into the tips of my toes and the lobes of my ears and my fingers stroking the fuzzy closecropped skull

shyly tingling fingers feel out the limits of the hard immortal skull under the flesh a deathshead and skeleton sits wearing glasses in the arbor under the lucid occasional raindrops inside the new khaki uniform inside my twentyoneyearold body that's been swimming in the Marne in red and white-striped trunks in Chalons in the spring

AIRRAID

his voice was five thousand miles away all the time he kept wanting to get up outa bed his cheeks were bright pink and the choky breathing No kid you better lay there quiet we dont want you catching more

cold that's why they sent me down to stay with you to keep you from getting up outa bed

the barrelvaulted room all smells fever and whitewash carbolic sick wops outside the airraid sirens get a nightmare

Mestre's a railhead and its moonlight over the Brenta and the basehospital and the ammunition dumps

all the time he kept trying to get up outa bed Kiddo you better lay there quiet his voice was in Minnesota

but dontjaunerstandafellersgottogetup I got a date animportantengagementtoseeabout those lots ought nevertohavestayedinbedsolate I'll lose my deposit For chrissake dont you think I'm broke enough as it is?

Kiddo you gotto lay there quiet we're in the hospital in Mestre you got a little fever makes things seem funny

Cantyouletafellerbe? You're in cahoots withem thatswhatthematteris I knowthey'reouttorookme they think Imagoddamsucker tomadethatdeposit Illshowem Illknockyergoddamblockoff

my shadow on the vault bulkyclumsily staggering and swaying from the one candle spluttering red in the raw winterhospital carbolic night above the shadow on the cot gotto keep his shoulders down to the cot Curley's damn husky in spite of double pneumonia

you can hear their motors now the antiaircraft battering are letting loose must be great up there in the moonlight out of the smell of carbolic and latrines and sick wops sit back and light a macedonia by the candle he seems to be asleep his breathing's so tough pneumonia breathing can hear myself breathe and the water tick doctors and orderlies all down in the bombproof cant even hear a sick wop groan Jesus is the guy dying?

they've cut off their motors the little drums in my ears sure that's why they call em drums (up there in the blue moonlight the Austri observer's reaching for the little string that dumps the applecart) the candleflame stands up still

not that time but wham in the side of the head woke Curley and the glass tinkling in the windows the candle staggered but didnt go out the vault sways with my shadow and Curley's shadow dammit he's strong head's full of the fever reek Kiddo you gotto stay in bed (they dumped the applecart allright) shellfragments hailing around outside Kiddo you gotto get back to bed

But I gotadate Oh Christohsweetjesus cant you tell me how to get back to the outfit haveaheartdadididntmeannoharm itsnonly aboutthose lots the voice dwindles into a whine I'm pulling the covers up to his chin again light the candle smoke a macedonia look at my watch must be near day ten o'clock they relieve me at eight

way off a voice goes up and up and swoops like the airraid siren — ayayootOO

VILLE LUMIÈRE

daylight enlarges out of ruddy quiet very faintly throbbing wanes into my sweet darkness broadens red through the warm blood weighting the lids warmsweetly then snaps on

enormously blue yellow pink

today is Paris pink sunlight hazy on the clouds against patches of robinsegg a tiny siren hoots shrilly traffic drowsily rumbles clatters over the cobbles taxis squawk the yellow's the comforter through the open window the Louvre emphasizes its sedate architecture of graypink stone between the Seine and the sky

and the certainty of Paris

the towboat shiny green and red chugs against the current towing three black and mahoganyvarnished barges their deckhouse windows have green shutters and lace curtains and pots of geraniums in flower to get under the bridge a fat man in blue had to let the little black stack drop flat to the deck

Paris comes into the room in the servantgirl's eyes the

warm bulge of her breasts under the gray smock the smell of chickory in coffee scalded milk and the shine that crunches on the crescent rolls stuck with little dabs of very sweet unsalted butter

in the yellow paperback of the book that halfhides the agreeable countenance of my friend

Paris of 1919

paris-mutuel

roulettewheel that spins round the Tour Eiffel red square white square a million dollars a billion marks a trillion roubles baisse du franc or a mandate for Montmartre

Cirque Medrano the steeplechase gravity of cellos tuning up on the stage at the Salle Gaveau oboes and a triangle la musique s'en fout de moi says the old marchioness jingling with diamonds as she walks out on Stravinski but the red colt took the jumps backwards and we lost all our money

la peinture opposite the Madeleine Cezanne Picasso Modigliani

Nouvelle Athenes

la poesie of manifestos always freshtinted on the kiosks and slogans scrawled in chalk on the urinals L'UNION DES TRAVAILLEURS FERA LA PAIX DU MONDE

revolution round the spinning Eiffel Tower

that burns up our last year's diagrams the dates fly off the calendar we'll make everything new today is the Year 1 Today is the sunny morning of the first day of spring We gulp our coffee splash water on us jump into our clothes run downstairs step out wideawake into the first morning of the first day of the first year

John Dos Passos.

RECITAL

(for jane)

WHAT shall I call on to protect
My sister?
No name halts the white carriages
Of stars wheeling over the prospect
Earth has in the breast of heaven,
Nor the wave that disparages,
Darkly lifting, the trespass the docks
Have made into the river the stars lately fall
In and close the air to any named,
To any call
Against the wind blowing the lamp
Burning the blood, the sweet red oil.
What shall I name fitfully even
Within, but the liquid breath
Breathing, selfish, helpless, the remote death
In with all the closed, closed night,
After the locks
Have held and the softly-shut door has maimed
The cry for the river's bold recoil
To morning, red or gray, the word-flight
From good-bye and the welling damp,
Frost blackening the heart of heaven.

KENNETH WHITE

OFF THE LUKE ROAD

"I GET her some honeysuckle . . ." honeysuckle breaking down the fence rows, sags at the creekside and drowning itself into the dirty water, . . . and head down in the honeysuckle Gain Adams with a slit in his throat like at hog-killing, and all around his head honeysuckle redder than rock columbine, and red-legged flies walking up and down his hair. . . . Rike felt he never want to see salt port again, — not pork or cucumbers of Mrs Adams — maybe she'd have give him pickles, — pickles that curdled on his mouth — if he'd have brought her honeysuckle, — he would have give her a hunk of it, sticky white with sweet smell, and she'd have give him cucumbers — jar from the earth cellar — if he'd have brung her honeysuckle . . . that's what he come down for, — half mile from the road it was, two hours from noon, and a sun one foot above his ears, and a piece of it sitting on his head back like fire leech, and the rest holding down all earth with its big dry hand. . . . And here was Gain Adams flat in the sun with honeysuckle growing into his neck and flies walking round his hair, buzzing like from cow dung in the pastures, while Mrs Adams drove up and down the north road where was the way he should have come home since Tuesday, and the Morgans out searching all the rye fields from Hollow to Elton where he was at the day after he left Hollow and now it was Thursday. . . . "How long Gain Adams been here Lord? O God Almighty who killed Gain Adams? who killed

Gain Adams in the honeysuckle? and what I do now Lord? . . . Maybe should I rush back down to Mrs Adams . . . 'I found him Mrs Adams.' I found Gain Adams back there off the Luke Road, down in a mess of honeysuckle with his throat slit open and red on the honeysuckle" . . . Down knelt Rike in the high heat, almost to faint out with grape scent and honeysuckle smothering on the white air . . . feeling skin on Gain Adams wrist, poke-stiffness under his shirt, felt sick enough to die right there in the hot vines and bee warmness. . . . "He aint died long, its sun heat on his skin, but he dont smell none . . . six hours maybe, maybe four hours, . . ." and a new path going south in the blue grass, and ending where the creek was. . . . "What I do now Lord? I cant move him none, — two hundred pounds him and me one sack ten and skinny as a buzzard leg. . . . I aint going to tell I found him. . . . I aint going to tell nobody. . . . First thing they say, 'How come you found Gain Adams when nobody else could? — Pickin honeysuckle was you? pickin honeysuckle at the creek top!' . . . Rows around and menacing, and the four walls of court room like when they tried Abels nigger — 'How come you you found Mr Abel when nobody else could? pickin daisies in a corn field was you?' . . . and the four walls shook up and down with everybody laughing . . . and the nigger cried like he was too full of water, and said he was huntin quail and Mr Abel was dead of sun stroke, and got mixed up in his story so that they give him a yam pie like he wanted and strung him up on Wensday, and wished that the vultures would come over from Clair County so they'd be spared a grave digging but they wern't. . . . "I wont tell nobody I found him . . . I go home I'd be afraid. Youre a young kid, they'd say, but you could have done it, — where's the razor you done it with — wheres the razor you done it with over in the honeysuckle? . . . I aint a going to tell. . . . I come this way and went on by, — I went on by and come back Hollow and saw

nothin but the beardstongue and green plums at the fence row. . . . I aint seen no red honeysuckle at the creek top . . . I aint seen no red honeysuckle at the creek top . . . I aint seen nothing this day June. . . . But suppose Mrs Adams went on up and down the road farms hunting and asking "Have you any seen Gain Adams? Have you seen my husband anybody since he went out to Elton on a Monday it was he went out to Elton. . . ." "Maybe he aint coming back Mrs Adams, — maybe he run away, maybe he's drunk over to Elton now. . . ." "But they say he left Elton Joe Morgan — left Elton on a Tuesday — I ask there first and they say he left Tuesday from Elton. He wouldn't have not come back except he's — O God O God! what'll I do now . . ." and she'd go home to cook and cry and feed the steers, half mindgone with looking up the lane for Mr Adams and thinking she hear the little boys scream up "He's come back, Ma, he's here Ma, he aint dead or gone off any more" . . . and she'd rush back smashing down neck high clover by the wagon rut, and there'd be only the whippoorwill shouting and the little boys fast asleep without a sound. . . . And now he'd found Gain Adams, — he'd have to tell her, tell her he found him in the honeysuckle, but he wouldn't, — not now — not anybody — not now — wait till the cherrys done. They might get rot or be stolen while he was testifying in the court while he was testifying "I dont know nothing about it judge, I found him in the honeysuckle, thats what I know, thats all . . ." and all the time cherries falling in the hot grass, falling dead ripe and going brown, and nobody to pick them for jarring, — nobody but his ma's ma, feeble as a spider and wait — mad for him to come back and save up the heavy twigs — and they'd keep him days, — weeks maybe maybe months — just for repeating "I didn't do it judge — I found him in the honeysuckle, it wasn't me slit his throat open" . . . and even if they ended with believing — there'd be all the cherrys dead and the spinach gone up to seed, and

the beets jammed one on another till they die starved, and nobody but the old woman to save up the last root and cut down the jimson weed by the hog lot so the shoats wouldn't go silly off the fruit end . . . and all the time him in the jail house — "I didn't do it judge, I didn't do nothing but find Gain Adams, head down in the honeysuckle, two hours, maybe four hours cold at the creek top! . . . No I wont tell nobody not even at home I wont tell nobody, — I wait till the cherrys done, — between the cherrys and the peach-ripe I tell her," — but who strip the bean vines — nine rows this year — nine rows for jarring and him in jail saying "I aint done it" . . . over and over like a poor feeble wit and nobody to believe him no more than if he was one. . . . He couldn't tell now — not now — . . . maybe somebody else would find Gain Adams — maybe vultures come over the ridge like they did once when his ma was a girl, come clear over the ridge from Clair County hunting something in the buck brush and nobody ever told what they found there, but they stay two whole days and then gone back where they come from again. . . . But if he waited, if he waited one day even, he couldn't ever tell — they'd say "Why didn't you bust in Hollow and tell us soon you found him Rike Wilhite? Why'd you wait since Thursday? everybody know you aint been on the Luke Road since Thursday — how come you didn't tell Thursday?" . . . and what'd he say then? — "I got afraid . . . I didn't want them cherrys waste . . . I got afraid . . . I didn't want no death . . . I got my bean vines to pick yet. . . . You string up Abels nigger, you string up me like Abels nigger. . . . I want living, I aint had but sixteen years yet. . . ." Then they'd laugh, like they laugh at Abels nigger — "Gain Adams didn't want no death either" they'd say, and swing him off a white oak till his eyes popped out like grape pulp, and his nose went blacker than a pine ooze. . . . Now was a mile of dry cedar rows and then Mrs Adams chimney like a

thumb up in the maple leaves, and all around the ungrown corn, and plants come to potato blossom. . . . "O Lord dont have her home . . . I dont want her to see me . . ."

. . . "Why'nt you stop, Rike? You aint seen him have you Rike? There aint nothing in the mail box here, not yet, ten times today I looked and not a word from him." . . .

"No I aint see him Mrs Adams, me and Bennin come by the Luke Road, he wouldn't have come by that road, he'd have come by the north road from Elston, thats a long way from Luke Road. . . . Wish I could help you Mrs Adams. . . . No I aint seen him nowhere. . . . Goodbye Mrs Adams" . . . "Goodbye Rike" . . .

There aint no light anymore. . . . Its getting nine o'clock now, . . . stars opening up . . . moonflower smell from thornapples blossoms . . . willows look like moss lumps along creek bottoms . . . gettin darker . . . make faster Bennin . . . Morning vines waitin for the morning . . . Mrs Adams waitin for her man sliced over in the honeysuckle . . . aint no morning for Mrs Adams . . . aint never any morning for Mrs Adams . . . one mile . . . one half mile . . . Bennin lather like a soap cake along the traces. . . .

"Why you so late Rike? We aint left nothing but the rump end — there on the stove see? — Aint you going to eat nothing Rike? Shrunk up like a dead bean you look — Olly left you her potaty — aint you going to eat nothing Rike?"

"I'm sick in my stummick, I aint going to eat nothing granma, I feel like I should sleep to death from being tired. . . ."

"Dont you talk about death Rike Wilhite! — I seen sunlight coming down road this noon hour, — I seen sunlight and I seen shadow walking up and down road this noon hour, and I aint seen nothing to make a cloud casting out of empty sky. . . . — Dont you talk no more about death to me Rike Wilhite. . . ."

"O God, leave me be now, — leave me be!" . . . Horned

owls drifting up the cedar rows . . . horned owls shape of Death to corn rats . . . once Gain Adams was shape of Death to horned owls . . . four owls he'd killed and hammered on his barn-side . . . — and what had been shape of Death for Gain Adams? "I don want to think! I don want to think!" . . . Three hours to four o'clock, — three hours to sunlight coming. . . . Mrs Adams peering out the window at four o'clock and nobody to see walk up the high clover path . . . only wet steers and the night-wet pasture and the broke pump handle under the grape vines. . . . "I can't never tell now though, — I told Mrs Adams I aint seen him off the Luke Road on a Thursday, — thats all, thats all, its all over now. . . . Leave me be God, leave me be!" . . .

Three headed judge with owl eyes looking down on Rike crumpled like a pea leaf where the road forks off to Elton. . . . "What was you doing at the creek top Rike Wilhite? — Pickin daisies out of a big slit was you? — picking daisies out of a red slit like an open mouth. . . . Where'd you throw that razor when you done what you done over off the Luke road on a Thursday noon? Why'nt you tell Mrs Adams, "I found your husband, Mrs Adams", when she ask you have you seen him, Rike? . . . Tie him up with honeysuckle, strong rope of honeysuckle — tie his feet with grape rope. . . . Hanged men go down to damnation. . . . Cut him loose Mrs Wilhite . . . let him fall clear through the earth crust. . . ." "O God I wanta live! I dont wanta die now! — I'm smotherin', I'm smotherin' in honeysuckle. . . ."

"Rike Wilhite, what you shoutin' for? sweatin' up like a sour beet, frog-foot cold, and shoutin, like a wild cat! Olly's shook out the coffee pot — can't you smell it up the stairs? — what you shoutin' about honeysuckle — aint no honeysuckle in a mile of here. . . . Drink out that coffee cup. . . . Bacon you got, and Olly make you buckcakes, — you aint dyin' Rike! — empty in the stomach is what you have. — Now you take over to Mrs Adams and say you help with

hauling water till Gain come back from over Elton. . . . Rike you look wilt like a sick petunny, — what happen to you come back from Holster? — what happen to you over on Luke Road from Holster?" . . .

. . . . . .

. . . Wild carrot bent over with its head weight, hawkweed in the orchards, mulberrys mashing in the hog lot, and cherry trees gone of fruit now . . . second of July now, and daisies shrivelled up to hay sticks . . . one fourth mile on to Mrs Adams. . . . Mrs Adams going to leave Hollow in three days now, going to take her grain wagon and leave Hollow in three days now, . . . wild cherrys going to be almost black when Mrs Adams leave Hollow, and raspberries fall off their hoop vines when she gone. . . . Red lilies turning backwards, lilies spotted like a turtle neck. . . . Mrs Adams going to move down where her brother is, down near the river bluff where Branville is. . . .

"Rike you know where is Branville, up on the river bluff? Rike, if Gain come back here lookin' for me, you tell him where I gone; — tell him I waited half and quarter month for him coming back; Rike, you tell him — tell him I thought he was dead or he would have come back long afore this. Tell him I waited for him till I thought he was dead, — you tell him that wont you, Rike? You wont forget if he comes back hunting me, and me down to the river bluff and thinking him dead from life?"

"I wont forget Mrs Adams. I wont never forget if he comes hunting back. . . ."

Vervain up purple in the sideroad dust. . . . Dark eyes of Mrs Adams house, hall broke and hinge sagging, house empty as a sheep skull, wing squirrels nesting in the cold chimneys. . . . August now, and lupin gone to seed, wild peas rattling under foot, red hawks cry out and chase in the high air, and poke berries come to blackness. . . . Poke berries make a poison death, — not a fast death like a knife slit — "Can't I

never forget Lord? can't I never forget? — aint there no forgetting on the up side of earth? . . ."

Spider winding in the green fir, white silk of grave clothes, life-flies wound to death in white silk, tremble in the spider's mouth. . . . August nights of red moon . . . grapes hot still in night darkness . . . hay smell coming down the cow path, — "Shadow coming down this white path, aint nothing but moon shadow, tall moon shadow, fly-light splattering up my eyelids . . . there aint no shadow, — no tall shadow like a cedar spike, nothin standin there hold up its head with a half moon under where its neck is, with a red sickle half moon where its throat is — O God! *he's* come back lookin for Mrs Adams . . . I can't run now, I can't even move now . . . he hunt me into shadow, he see me into moonlight . . . there aint no shadow big enough to hide in. . . . What you lookin' for Gain Adams? Who you huntin' down this white path? There aint nobody livin here now — she aint here, Gain Adams, she aint here anymore, she moved down the river bluff, down south, that way, to the river bluff. . . . Tell him, she says, Rike, — tell him I thought he was dead or I would have wait for all-years. . . . — What you laughin' at Gain Adams? — O God — he aint laughin' — its the red mouth turning up where his neck was. . . ."

Honeysuckle smell where there aint no honeysuckle anymore. . . . Black snake sliding over spread hands. . . . Rike lying like a shot crow, stiff across the path. . . .

"Rike what you lying here in the dust for? — All night I wait back for you, — all night me and Olly wait mad for you coming back home. . . . Rike Wilhite, whats this you saying me? . . .

". . . and Gain Adams lie over off the Luke Road, head down by the creek top, head down on the honey-vines, with a hog-slit where his throat was . . . Now let me be, Lord, . . . now let me sleep. . . .

J. W. Johnson

THREE POEMS

THIS is a theme for muted coronets
To dangle from debilitated heads
Of navigation, kings, or riverbeds
That rot or rise what time the seamew sets
Her course by stars among the smoky tides
Entangled. Old saltencrusted Proteus treads
Once more the watery shore that water weds
While rocking fathom bell rings round and rides.

Now when the blind king of the water thinks
The sharp hail of the salt out of his eyes
To abdicate, run thou, O Prince, and fall
Upon him. This cracked walrus skin that stinks
Of the rank sweat of a mermaid's thighs
Cast off, and nab him: when you have him, call.

IN THE WILDERNESS

HE walks alone, uncomforted,
In Spring's green ripple, Autumn's red.

Birds, like dark starlight,
Twinkle in the sky, are light

As feathers blown about in a gale,
And their song is as cold and sharp as hail.

The lonely air and the hard ground
Are crying to him with no sound

Words that the hurdy-gurdy year
Whines ceaselessly in his sad ear.

He walks between the green leaf and the red
Like one who follows a beloved dead,

And with a young, pedantic eye
Observes how still the dead do lie.

His gaze is stopped in the hard earth,
And cannot penetrate to heaven's mirth.

LIKE AN OLD PROUD KING IN A PARABLE

A BITTER king in anger to be gone
From fawning courtier and doting queen
Flung hollow sceptre and gilt crown away,
And breaking bound of all his counties green
He made a meadow in the northern stone
And breathed a palace of inviolable air
To cage a heart that carolled like a swan,
And slept alone, immaculate and gay,
With only his Pride for a paramour.

O who is that bitter king? It is not I.

Let me, I beseech thee Father, die
From this fat royal life, and lie
As naked as a bridegroom by his bride,
And let that girl be the cold goddess Pride.

And I will sing to the barren rock
Your difficult, lonely music, heart,
Like an old proud king in a parable.

A. J. M. Smith

IN PASSING

THE mountains were blue, but not blue enough. When the air was warm and still, I waited in the field and listened for something. At times little gusts of wind would move restlessly among the crisp leaves of corn. I did not know what was the matter with me, but I could not work. So I went to my father and said: "I want to go to New York. I don't know why, but I must go." My father said: "When you have a Call, there is nothing to do but be a man and face it." So I left Tennessee.

I will skip the times I worked in Coffee Pot restaurants for something to eat. But I never begged. I felt God in me. I prayed to Him, and He promised me a job in a bank and that was how I came to be a bank clerk.

I used to come to work at 8:30 and sit all day at a long table with fifteen other boys. We checked the figures on stock certificates and made sure that the new certificates had been transferred in the right amount for the old certificates. I also made out receipts for the Registered Mail Department. I could do all this because I had had a very good high school education, and the work was simple anyway. When there were only a few certificates, the Head would

say: "Take this," and I would prove some figures on an adding machine. We got through by 5:30 or later.

It was all very dull and New York made me tired, although I was a strong boy. Each building was a stone jail to lock me in during the daytime and part of a row of walls at night for me to walk between. I felt like I couldn't get air in my lungs, I was that pressed in. I have a big red hand. I wanted to double up my fist and bash things. "Damn you, New York!" That was how I felt.

Over in Mulberry Street where I lived in a rooming house were a lot of foreigners, mostly dirty Italians. They swarmed out in the street at night and sat around like black flies in molasses. The streets smelled bad, and they smelled bad, but they all seemed quite happy and shouted nearly all night. I felt very strange. You don't know how you get to miss walking among shaggy trees, and kicking up dust in the road and smelling the blackberry bushes when the sun is hot, and gazing off in the distance where the mountains kneel before God.

Although I am a Baptist, I used to go to Trinity Church during my lunch hour. There was the Shrine of All Saints, at the end of a cool, shadowy aisle. The Shrine was like the inner part of a long cave. It reminded me of the blue and white sea shell which we had on our mantelpiece at home and what you would expect to find if you were a bug and crawled in the shell round and round until you reached the last dimly shining chamber beyond the last curve.

Here you felt quite shut-in and at peace.

One wall of the stone chapel had cloudy colored windows, with a great spread of little saints all over the glass, each with his little beard and little robe and mild face, the color of taffy candy. A quiet Christ was holding an open book in the window above the altar. A red light from the candle in a glass wavered and threw shadows in the half-darkness.

I prayed to God to get me a raise at the bank. I seemed to

get a vague answer: "Wait." I waited several weeks, but nothing happened. I was restless. I clicked the adding machine faster every day, but I still got $23 a week. In a year I would get an automatic raise to $25, but it seemed that only a miracle would get me any more before then.

The boys said, "Why don't you get a girl? That would fix your troubles." But I said no, there was no girl I wanted. The girls at the office were fat and cheap. They chatter, chatter, chatter, "Hey, Sadie," this and "Hey, Louise" that. Just the same I thought it was a good idea. I began to think I would like a girl who would be small and dainty, like the little china figure we had on our mantel at home. She would have a touch of blue in her white dress and her hair would be yellow. Her skin would be soft like my mother's satin pin cushion and warm.

I asked for a girl like that. Almost as though He had spoken I heard God say, "Wait!" I glanced up hard at the painting in the window, but His face seemed to be without any expression, as though He were looking over my head. I concentrated hard, but nothing happened. Then I said, "No, I don't want to wait; I want a girl now. I don't care what happens; get me a girl right now!" I should have known better than to dictate to God.

A few evenings later I was going uptown on the subway. It was crowded with people from the Seventh Avenue fur district, but I was used to jostling and being uncomfortable. But slowly I forgot about smells and greasy people. I don't know where she got on, but there was a tall girl standing next to me. You have seen how a jonquil stands out from weeds? She was like that.

She wore a gray-green suit that made her resemble a tall lily. She had a floppy, yellow straw hat that hid her face at first. As she lightly touched the white enamel support with a brown gloved hand, she really did seem like a tall flower that swayed with the breeze instead of the subway jerks. In her

other hand she held a London paper which she was reading with her head bent so that the brim of her hat hid her face.

As we passed a station she looked up. You do not know how fast the words come when I think of the first time she raised her head. Her face was clear, like a cold stream that rushes and flashes so quickly that you do not see the ripples. Under her long eyebrows, her eyes were gray like shadows on the water. Her mouth was long and her lips looked soft and gentle. I knew that I would love her.

I thought that she might leave and I became afraid. The palms of my hands began to sweat. My heart grew so big I could feel it in my chest. My legs shook and I turned my face away because I knew I was turning slightly red, instead of pale as you're supposed to do. So this is love, I thought.

I decided that if she got off I would follow her. But she did not get off at the next stop and the longer she stayed the more happy and fearful I became. My shoulders are broad and I shoved backward and sideways so that there would be a better space for her and no one would come between us.

She noticed the space I had made for her and looked up again. I was about to say — I could not help it — "You are lovely!" but she looked down quickly for she must have known. I swallowed hard. She was so cool, like a swaying green lily, and I was so thirsty for her!

At Times Square a man got up to leave, and I stood in front of the seat so that she could have it. She took the seat and smiled. When I looked down at her, she was looking intently at her paper, but I knew that she was not reading, for her glance stayed too long on an advertisement for whiskey. Ho! An idea struck me. Maybe she was riding just to give me a chance. I took out a piece of paper, folded it thick, and while the train swayed, I wrote: "Is it possible for an impudent person to meet you? I would like to meet you. Will you write me a note?" I signed my name and address, folded the paper and without stopping to think, because I was so scared,

I dropped the note in her lap. She took it without looking up. I hurried to the end of the car. Thank God we were just getting to a station.

II

ON the way home, I thought I had been very foolish, for she might report me to the police or the office, but I wasn't sorry. When you have a Call, you must face it, whatever it is. I did not mind the Italians when I got home and I was glad that they were happy enough to sing. Nothing happened the next day, but the day after, I got her letter. Her handwriting was just as I had expected it to be, very distinguished. The lines were thick and straight up and down, the sort of handwriting that wins prizes in cigarette contests. I almost spoiled the envelope in opening it. This was the letter:

Dear Stranger:

I do not think you are impudent at all. It was thoughtful of you to give me a note instead of speaking in the subway. If you like, I will meet you at Grant's Tomb, Thursday evening at 7.30.

But I am afraid you are due a disappointment.

"Thursday evening. That is tomorrow." I carried the letter with me down into the street. It was not yet dark. I felt that I had to walk about. I was not conscious of any effort at walking, only a great lightness.

Next morning, I got up earlier and walked to work. I felt pleasantly numb, like when a dentist puts something cool into the tooth he is about to pull. I added the figures up faster than I had ever done. I made the machine rattle. I kept saying: "It is just six more hours, four more hours, three more hours —" 'til finally it was closing time. I hurried home and changed my shirt.

I had never been to Grant's Tomb because I come from free Tennessee mountaineer stock and we haven't any use for General Grant. But I am sure that no admirer of Grant in the North ever approached his tomb with such eagerness

and short breath as I did Thursday evening. I wore a decent gray suit I had bought in Chattanooga just before coming up. As we approached the tomb by bus, it seemed to grow frighteningly larger, like a white tea kettle with the lid about to blow off. Some people were strolling about on the stone steps, but she was not there. For a moment I thought she would not come, then I realized that I was half an hour too soon.

What should I talk about? I didn't know much about books. I could ask her about her London paper or tell her about my work, but no woman would give a tinker's damn about learning how to mark stock certificates or operate an adding machine. Then I remembered a verse of Scripture that went something like this: "When you are brought before the Judges, think not what you shall say, for in that hour it shall be given you what to say."

I forgot about saying anything when I saw her coming up the wide stone steps. She climbed grandly as though she were walking on level ground. I drank her in — walking, climbing, coming closer. She made me think of a Grecian priestess approaching a temple in the cool of the evening with a river flowing nearby under the trees, even though this was Grant's Tomb and the Hudson River was cluttered with coal barges. She wore a dark red hat, fitting close to her head, and a gray tweed suit. I do not remember the color of her shoes, but they had large silver, square buckles which made her feet look even slimmer and smaller. I like small feet on women.

She smiled quietly. "Am I late?" she asked. I was delighted. She had some traits like other girls and was, therefore, partly human.

"No, I have been here only a few minutes."

"You are not telling the truth," and she laughed. "I passed here earlier myself and saw you standing on the steps. I strolled down the Drive until time." I wanted to ask her why she didn't stop, but I didn't.

"It was brave of you to take a chance on meeting me," I said.

"Why not? I thought it would be rather a lark. Where shall we go?"

"Would you like to go to a show? I will take you anywhere that I can."

"Let's not bother with a show. It would probably be very stupid. I would rather we just fiddled along the Drive, or do you New Yorkers feel that you must always be going places?"

"I am not a New Yorker, I'm a Southerner, and you're English, aren't you?"

"Well that's where I started. I fancy I am still English. But you wanted me to suggest a place — how would it do for us to take that interesting ferry and cross over to Jersey. Who knows? There may be something charming in Jersey."

I thought it strange that a well-dressed girl would like to go ferry riding, but I should have known that she was not like any other girl — or any woman that had ever before been born. As we were going down to the ferry, she put her slim gloved fingers in the crook of my arm. "God, I thank Thee," I said quietly to myself. The ferry was crowded with people going home, so we walked to the front.

"Your sunsets are very beautiful." I looked, and what she said was true. The Palisades seemed like a brown and purple pillow in which the glowing sun sank down. The water was a gray sheet, speckled with dancing rust flakes. There was a fringe of trees at the shore line, very dark and black as though they had been caught and charred between two fires which wavered in the sky and flickered in the water.

We walked from the ferry landing behind a clomping horse, hauling a dray. When we came into the street, it seemed like an ordinary little flat-topped Jersey town with a rattling street car coming down to the ferry. "What do you think of this?"

"Don't know," she replied, "but if we poke along this road

up the river, something is bound to turn up." So we walked, looking in the open windows of house boats where people were eating supper and brawling, or playing with children or sitting in their sock feet, smoking. Finally we came to a wicket gate, beside a frame house, looking out on the river. A sign over the gate said: "German Dinners."

We had neither of us eaten, so we followed the passageway from the gate, past a large dining room where a few people were eating, out to a porch built over the river, where a vine grew up over our heads. It was the first vine I had seen in New York. While we ate, it grew twilight. We could see the lights strung out along the New York shore.

I remarked: "Those ferryboats seem like fireflies that have fallen in water." She had never seen a firefly, so I told her how the children in the mountains call them lightning bugs and put them in bottles to take to their rooms at night where they shine dimly a long time. And I told her how grand the mountains are.

"Then why did you come to New York?"

"Because I had a Call. If you have a Call, you must face it like a man."

"And?"

"I have found it," I said, looking at her like a dumb fool — a happy dumb fool.

"Tell me," she asked, frowning, "if a woman has a 'Call' should she face it like a man?"

"Oh, sure." I would have agreed to anything.

We had a good dinner and a mug of beer apiece. We ate without saying much because we seemed to be at peace. At times a warm feeling passed over me. After dinner we smoked several cigarettes and I was glad to be in the shadow, because I could watch her better. Her face was lovely and calm as I have always known it, and when she put the cigarette to her lips her face shone like a rosy cameo, and when she took her hand away her face was quiet again.

"You seem to be the sort of person who is always contented," I told her.

"You are a foolish, naive boy, David — sorry, I didn't mean to hurt you. Yes, I am always self-possessed. But contented? Who is? Perhaps I have traveled too far and lost myself in too many places."

"Anyway, you are quiet and peaceful."

She laughed. "Just to disprove that, we shall leave at once."

We walked back slowly the way we had come. There were hardly any cars on the road and there were quiet places under trees that overshadowed the walk. It felt like my chest was growing larger, little by little. Finally, I had courage to take her hand that was resting on my arm. We stopped under a tree; her breath was a little quicker, but she did not resist. She closed her eyes and let her head fall back. Her lips were soft and moist and warm. I grasped both arms round her and clamped her close to me as the staves of a barrel are held when a cooper places red-hot bands around them. Soft, willing lips and slim body. I kissed her eyes, but her lips fluttered and I could not leave them alone.

Then, "No, David . . . stop." She shook her head. She placed her hands against my chest and I released her immediately. She smiled: "We had better be going. This is not as it should be for a young lady who has just met a young man."

"I'll do whatever you want me to do," I said. We crossed on the ferry again, but I do not remember the details. I would have taken her home in a taxi, but she insisted on taking a bus down to her residence club on Riverside Drive. She would not kiss me again at the door.

"Are you angry with me?"

"No," she answered, closing the door, "indeed not." I do not remember the details, but I know that I got home all right that night. It seemed that I walked a long time.

There were many times when I saw her after that — there were no times between, just deep breaths between seeing her — somehow I managed to do my office work.

We went to many unusual and inexpensive places, once to an Italian marionette show in the basement of a house, where I held her hand in her lap. Sometimes we strolled along the Drive, to see the lights speckled on the water. Often we saw the sudden beauty of an angle of a building in the sky. I say "we" but she saw all of it first. She taught me the beauty of cities, to look and smell and hear and know that in everything that lives, in the pain of living itself, there is beauty. There is cool richness in silent things which she showed me in the beaten silverware of the windows on 57th Street. Something in silver reminded me of her.

It is curious how she saw everything in quiet flashes, by standing aloof from things. In a museum I always liked to get close to pictures and especially those parts that I liked best, while she stood off and took us both in, picture and me. I asked her why this was. "Because you are a romanticist, David. You see just what you want to see." In those days I saw so many things. It was like traveling in a train; if I did not like the scenery, I could always look at her. And I did not mind that she always looked at the scenery.

Then one evening we were walking in Central Park. It was not yet dark, so that walking down from 72nd Street we could see suddenly rising from the green plain, the solid jagged-edged wall of white and gray buildings on 59th Street. The sun had gone, but there was still the sweet smell of the hot grass, and the great peace of holding the arm of the girl you love and knowing that she wants to be with you.

She saw that I was happy; she saw that I was happy many times these days. She wrinkled her eyes a little and drew her mouth a queer way. "My Dear, it is dangerous to be so happy."

"I am not afraid — 'perfect love casteth out fear.'"

"I know, but that gives me the responsibility. . . . I don't want you to be hurt. I don't want you to depend upon anything and then be hurt."

"Oh, don't worry," I said with great sureness. "I haven't been in love long, but I know all about it. I cannot be hurt . . . there are two kinds of love, the sort of love that is only selfish love and requires that someone love you. That kind of person is like an empty cup which says, 'Fill me.' I may be partly like that, but I am also like a mountain stream that has broken the ice in springtime: I want to flood you, overflow you and keep on pouring out my heart to you. If you love me, okay; if you do not love me . . . if you do not love me . . . oh, my sweetheart, how I love you!"

She looked perplexed. "I do not understand it at all — I am still afraid." She saw that no one was near us, and quickly kissed me on the ear. "You are a Galahad." I had not heard the story, and so she explained.

"No, I am not a Galahad. But I am an Anglo-Saxon like yourself. My people were pioneers and they were poor but brave. I am a brave man, and I would die for you, or do anything you wanted."

She laughed and stuck her fingers in my hair. I swear the scalp tingled. "David, you are a queer boy," she told me, smiling gently. "You are born out of century. You should have lived in King Arthur's time when there were damsels in distress, and not in this day when girls ride in subways by themselves. But you are my knight; you are my knight in homespun."

We were almost down to 59th Street. We were walking on a little path near the lake. It was now dark. Suddenly she pulled my arm, turned me around facing her and reaching her arms around my neck, pulled my head down and kissed me on the forehead. Then she kissed me lightly on the mouth.

"You do not think I am a terrible girl? You will never think I am a terrible girl, will you, David?"

You cannot blame me for being astounded. "Say, you're getting daffy. Certainly not, I'll never think you're terrible!"

"Then I am going to ask you to excuse me to-night. I have some things to do. . . . No, no, I'll go home by myself."

I told her good-bye at the corner, joked with her about her being scared I'd think her terrible for breaking a date. Then I watched until she was out of sight, walking with long swinging steps. Then suddenly and abruptly she was lost in the passing crowd.

Every time she left me, even for a little bit, I felt the same emptiness. Somehow it was worse to-night. I rode home on the street car because it would take longer. We passed corner after corner and then I no longer knew it. You know how the big drum in the orchestra begins to rumble low down and then the beats come faster and faster until it roars. Great God, I knew she was leaving!

I came to my house. I came to my room. I went to the window. I went to the bed. I went to the window. "God . . . God . . . Oh, God, don't let her go!" I said I must be calm and pray. I went to the bed, I went to the window. Then I went to the bed and kneeled down, grabbing the brass post at the foot.

I could not say any words, just hold to the post with all my strength. I did not cry, and I decided not to ask God anything. I felt my insides pulled and tugged by little wires. I felt the wires cutting sharp and a great dampness inside as though I were bleeding. I did not cry.

Then everything stopped, just as though something cold had been pressed to my stomach, numbing the pain. I rose from the bed, feeling all the wires tangled and knotted inside me, but not hurting. I did not sneer at God; I spoke steadily from my heart: "I loved the girl purely. I wanted her, but

You would not let me have her. All right. All right. That's that."

I pulled a chair to the window. I looked down on the tattered street where the children were still playing. I lit my pipe and smoked quietly for a long time. The horrible noise the Italians call singing raged on for an hour. I wished it would rain or something. I wished it would hailstorm hard and drive the Italians off the street. But there was no rain and they kept on singing until I was ready to go down and pick a fight.

I remembered how yesterday I had liked the Italians because I was sure she loved me. A few days before I liked the sunshine and wind because I could smell her hair. I said to myself, if I go into the park now I will ache. I will see water that is blue-gray like her eyes and some tree that is tall and graceful. And when I pass store-windows I will see things she admired and people will buy those things, and that way she will be taken from me, piece by piece. Then New York will be noisy again like a hollow drum.

I will feel empty and paper cluttered, like a house people have moved away from. The empty pain is the worst pain of all; it is the feeling of being held in the air, and yet held up by nothing. Facing your facts like a man helps and when you are given a bitter cup, drink it — bottom up! I will never think she is terrible; I will be too proud. Why did she do it? I said I would find out that one thing. My throat felt hard and stiff. I felt sort of queer.

III

I WENT to her house. As soon as she opened the door I said: "When are you going and where are you going?" She had not been crying but her mouth was twisted. Off yonder, I heard her voice: "I am going to Boston to-morrow, and then to England."

"Just tell me why."

"Come on in." I came and sat in the living room. She went to her room and came out with a big black folder, tied with long black strings. She sat on the floor and untied the strings. I hunched in the chair. I could have kissed her hair as she bent over, but I did not want to. Her long fingers untied the black knots. Then she opened up Hell.

There fluttered out pages of color, reds and creams and yellows and blue. Then I saw they were pictures . . . beautiful pictures . . . her pictures . . . radiant, lovely . . . distant. . . . I knew everything . . . I was panting in a hot desert, yearning for the cool palm trees . . . just over each hill . . . just out of reach.

"Your pictures are very . . . nice. You are going to be a great artist, aren't you?"

"I don't know . . . but, there, David, you see what I want to do. I must do that. I don't know whether you would call it a career; it's just something I must do. I must do it! I can't become involved, or have complications . . . oh, I'm sorry, but I can't help saying that."

My chest was like a board. "That's perfectly . . . all right. . . . What was I going to say . . . oh — don't let anything encumber you, ever. I am sorry if I bothered you."

I got up. She touched my knee with her hand. "David . . . well, you see we are just like two trains that didn't run on schedule. One of us should have waited somewhere."

"But how could I tell!"

Her mouth twisted a little. "I don't know, David. Maybe I can tell you when I've found my Call."

I should not have said it: "You'll sort of wait for me until then?"

"You are very young . . . David!" Then she stooped quickly to gather up her drawings, and her brown hair dropped over her face like a curtain on the stage. I left her like that.

GEORGE TICHENOR

AUTUMN REFRAIN

THE skreak and skritter of evening gone
And grackles gone and sorrows of the sun,
The sorrows of sun, too, gone . . . the moon and moon,
The yellow moon of words about the nightingale
In measureless measures, not a bird for me
But the name of a bird and the name of a nameless air
I have never — shall never hear. And yet beneath
The stillness that comes to me out of this, beneath
The stillness of everything gone, and being still,
Being and sitting still, something resides,
Some skreaking and skrittering residuum,
And grates these evasions of the nightingale
Though I have never — shall never hear that bird.
And the stillness is in the key, all of it is,
The stillness is all in the key of that desolate sound.

WALLACE STEVENS

EXAMPLES OF WALLACE STEVENS

THE most striking if not the most important thing about Mr. Stevens' verse is its vocabulary — the collection of words, many of them uncommon in English poetry, which on a superficial reading seems characteristic of the poems. An air of preciousness bathes the mind of the casual reader when he finds such words as fubbed, girandoles, curlicues, catarrhs, gobbet, diaphanes, clopping, minuscule, pipping, pannicles, carked, ructive, rapey, cantilene, buffo, fiscs, phylactery, princox, and funest. And such phrases as "thrum with a proud douceur," or "A pool of pink, clippered with lilies scudding the bright chromes," hastily read, merely increase the feeling of preciousness. Hence Mr. Stevens has a bad reputation among those who dislike the finicky, and a high one, unfortunately, among those who value the ornamental sounds of words but who see no purpose in developing sound from sense.

Both classes of reader are wrong. Not a word listed above is used preciously; not one was chosen as an elegant substitute for a plain term; each, in its context, was a word

definitely meant. The important thing about Mr. Stevens' vocabulary is not the apparent oddity of certain words, but the uses to which he puts those words with others. It is the way that Mr. Stevens combines kinds of words, unusual in a single context, to reveal the substance he had in mind, which is of real interest to the reader.

Good poets gain their excellence by writing an existing language *as if* it were their own invention; and as a rule success in the effect of originality is best secured by fidelity, in an extreme sense, to the individual words as they appear in the dictionary. If a poet knows precisely what his words represent, what he writes is much more likely to seem new and strange — and even difficult to understand —, than if he uses his words ignorantly and at random. That is because when each word has definite character the combinations cannot avoid uniqueness. Even if a text is wholly quotation, the condition of quotation itself qualifies the text and makes it so far unique. Thus a quotation made from Marvell by Eliot has a force slightly different from what it had when Marvell wrote it. Though the combination of words is unique it is read, if the reader knows his words either by usage or dictionary, with a shock like that of recognition. The recognition is not limited, however, to what was already known in the words; there is a perception of something previously unknown, something new which is a result of the combination of the words, something which is literally an access of knowledge. Upon the poet's skill in combining words as much as upon his private feelings, depends the importance or the value of the knowledge.

In some notes on the language of E. E. Cummings I tried to show how that poet, by relying on his private feelings and using words as if their meanings were spontaneous with use, succeeded mainly in turning his words into empty shells. With very likely no better inspiration in the life around him, Mr. Stevens, by combining the insides of those words he found

fit to his feelings, has turned his words into knowledge. Both Mr. Stevens and Cummings issue in ambiguity — as any good poet does; but the ambiguity of Cummings is that of the absence of known content, the ambiguity of a phantom which no words could give being; while Mr. Stevens' ambiguity is that of a substance so dense with being, that it resists paraphrase and can be truly perceived only in the form of words in which it was given. It is the difference between poetry which depends on the poet and poetry which depends on itself. Reading Cummings you either guess or supply the substance yourself. Reading Mr. Stevens you have only to know the meanings of the words and to submit to the conditions of the poem. There is a precision in such ambiguity all the more precise because it clings so closely to the stuff of the poem that separated it means nothing.

Take what would seem to be the least common word in the whole of *Harmonium* [1] — funest (page 74, line 6.) The word means sad or calamitous or mournful and is derived from a French word meaning fatal, melancholy, baneful, and has to do with death and funerals. It comes ultimately from the latin *funus* for funeral. Small dictionaries do not stock it. The poem in which it appears is called "Of the Manner of addressing Clouds," which begins as follows:

> Gloomy grammarians in golden gowns,
> Meekly you keep the mortal rendezvous,
> Eliciting the still sustaining pomps
> Of speech which are like music so profound
> They seem an exaltation without sound.
> Funest philosophers and ponderers,
> Their evocations are the speech of clouds.
> So speech of your processionals returns
> In the casual evocations of your tread
> Across the stale, mysterious seasons. . . .

[1] The references are to the new edition of *Harmonium*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1931. This differs from the first edition in that three poems have been cut out and fourteen added.

The sentence in which funest occurs is almost a parenthesis. It *seems* the statement of something thought of by the way, suggested by the clouds, which had better be said at once before it is forgotten. In such a casual, disarming way, resembling the way of understatement, Mr. Stevens often introduces the most important elements in his poems. The oddity of the word having led us to look it up we find that, once used, funest is better than any of its synonyms. It is the essence of the funeral in its sadness, not its sadness alone, that makes it the right word: the clouds are going to their death, as not only philosophers but less indoctrinated ponderers know; so what they say, what they evoke, in pondering, has that much in common with the clouds. Suddenly we realise that the effect of funest philosophers is due to the larger context of the lines preceding, and at the same time we become aware that the statement about their evocations is central to the poem and illuminates it. The word pomps, above, means ceremony and comes from a greek word meaning procession, often, by association, a funeral, as in the phrase funeral pomps. So the pomps of the clouds suggests the funeral in funest.

The whole thing increases in ambiguity the more it is analysed, but if the poem is read over after analysis, it will be seen that *in the poem* the language is perfectly precise. In its own words it is clear, and becomes vague in analysis only because the analysis is not the poem. We use analysis properly in order to discard it and return that much better equipped to the poem.

The use of such a word as funest suggests more abstract considerations, apart from the present instance. The question is whether or not and how much the poet is stretching his words when they are made to carry as much weight as funest carries above. Any use of a word stretches a word slightly, because any use selects from among many meanings the right one, and then modifies that in the context. Beyond

this necessary stretching, words cannot perhaps be stretched without coming to nullity — as the popular stretching of awful, grand, swell, has more or less nullified the original senses of those words. If Mr. Stevens stretches his words slightly, as a live poet should and must, it is in such a way as to make them seem more precisely themselves than ever. The context is so delicately illuminated, or adumbrated, that the word must be looked up, or at least thought carefully about, before the precision can be seen. This is the precision of the expert pun, and every word, to a degree, carries with it in any given sense the puns of all its senses.

But it may be a rule that only the simple words of a language, words with several, even groups of meanings, can be stretched the small amount that is possible. The reader must have room for his research; and the more complex words are usually plays upon simple words, and limited in their play. In the instance above the word funest is not so much itself stretched by its association with philosophers as the word philosophers — a simple word with many senses — stretches funest. That is, because Mr. Stevens has used the word funest, it cannot easily be detached and used by others. The point is subtle. The meaning so doubles upon itself that it can be understood only in context. It is the context that is stretched by the insertion of the word funest; and it is that stretch, by its ambiguity, that adds to our knowledge.

A use of words almost directly contrary to that just discussed may be seen in a very different sort of poem — "The Ordinary Women" (page 13). I quote the first stanza to give the tone:

> Then from their poverty they rose,
> From dry catarrhs, and to guitars
> They flitted
> Through the palace walls.

Then skipping a stanza, we have this, for atmosphere:

> The lacquered loges huddled there
> Mumbled zay-zay and a-zay, a-zay.
> The moonlight
> Fubbed the girandoles.

The loges huddled probably because it was dark or because they didn't like the ordinary women, and mumbled perhaps because of the moonlight, perhaps because of the catarrhs, or even to keep key to the guitars. Moonlight, for Mr. Stevens, is mental, fictive, related to the imagination and meaning of things; naturally it fubbed the girandoles (which is equivalent to cheated the chandeliers, was stronger than the artificial light, if any) . . . Perhaps and probably but no doubt something else. I am at loss, and quite happy there, to know anything literally about this poem. Internally, inside its own words, I know it quite well by simple perusal. The charm of the rhymes is enough to carry it over any stile. The strange phrase, "Fubbed the girandoles," has another charm, like that of the rhyme, and as inexplicable: the approach of language, through the magic of elegance, to nonsense. That the phrase is not nonsense, that on inspection it retrieves itself to sense, is its inner virtue. Somewhere between the realms of ornamental sound and representative statement, the words pause and balance, dissolve and resolve. This is the mood of Euphues, and presents a poem with fine parts controlled internally by little surds of feeling that save both the poem and its parts from preciousness. The ambiguity of this sort of writing consists in the double importance of both sound and sense where neither has direct connection with the other but where neither can stand alone. It is as if Mr. Stevens wrote two poems at once with the real poem somewhere between, unwritten but vivid.

A poem which exemplifies not the approach merely but actual entrance into nonsense is "Disillusionment of Ten

O'Clock" (page 88). This poem begins by saying that houses are haunted by white nightgowns, not nightgowns of various other colours, and ends with these lines:

> People are not going
> To dream of baboons and periwinkles.
> Only, here and there, an old sailor,
> Drunk and asleep in his boots,
> Catches tigers
> In red weather.

The language is simple and declarative. There is no doubt about the words or the separate statements. Every part of the poem makes literal sense. Yet the combination makes a nonsense, and a nonsense much more convincing than the separate sensible statements. The statement about catching tigers in red weather coming after the white nightgowns and baboons and periwinkles, has a persuasive force out of all relation to the sense of the words. Literally, there is nothing alarming in the statement, and nothing ambiguous, but by so putting the statement that it appears as nonsense, infinite possibilities are made terrifying and plain. The shock and virtue of nonsense is this: it compels us to scrutinise the words in such a way that we see the enormous ambiguity in the substance of every phrase, every image, every word. The simpler the words are the more impressive and certain is the ambiguity. Half our sleeping knowledge is in nonsense; and when put in a poem it wakes.

The edge between sense and nonsense is shadow thin, and in all our deepest convictions we hover in the shadow, uncertain whether we know what our words mean, nevertheless bound by the conviction to say them. I quote the second half of "The Death of a Soldier" (page 129):

> Death is absolute and without memorial,
> As in a season of autumn,
> When the wind stops,

When the wind stops and, over the heavens,
The clouds go, nevertheless,
In their direction.

To gloss such a poem is almost impertinent, but I wish to observe that in the passage just quoted, which is the important half of the poem, there is an abstract statement, "Death is absolute and without memorial," followed by the notation of a natural phenomenon. The connection between the two is not a matter of course; it is syntactical, poetic, human. The point is, by combining the two, Mr. Stevens has given his abstract statement a concrete, sensual force; he has turned a conviction, an idea, into a feeling which did not exist, even in his own mind, until he had put it down in words. The feeling is not exactly in the words, it is because of them. As in the body sensations are definite but momentary, while feelings are ambiguous (with reference to sensations) but lasting; so in this poem the words are definite but instant, while the feelings they raise are ambiguous (with reference to the words) and have importance. Used in this way, words, like sensations, are blind facts which put together produce a feeling no part of which was in the data. We cannot say, abstractly, in words, any better what we know, yet the knowledge has become positive and the conviction behind it indestructible, because it has been put into words. That is one business of poetry, to use words to give quality and feeling to the precious abstract notions, and so doing to put them beyond words and beyond the sense of words.

A similar result from a different mode of the use of words may be noticed in such a poem as "The Emperor of Ice-Cream" (page 85):

Call the roller of big cigars,
The muscular one, and bid him whip
In kitchen cups concupiscent curds.
Let the wenches dawdle in such dress
As they are used to wear, and let the boys
Bring flowers in last month's newspapers.

Let be be finale of seem.
The only emperor is the emperor of ice-cream.

Take from the dresser of deal,
Lacking the three glass knobs, that sheet
On which she embroidered fantails once
And spread it so as to cover her face.
If her horny feet protrude, they come
To show how cold she is, and dumb.
Let the lamp affix its beam.
The only emperor is the emperor of ice-cream.

The poem might be called Directions for a Funeral, with Two Epitaphs. We have a corpse laid out in the bedroom and we have people in the kitchen. The corpse is dead; then let the boys bring flowers in last month's (who would use to-day's?) newspapers. The corpse is dead; but let the wenches wear their everyday clothes — or is it the clothes they are used to wear at funerals? The conjunction of a muscular man whipping desirable desserts in the kitchen and the corpse protruding horny feet, gains its effect because of its oddity — not of fact, but of expression: the light frivolous words and rapid metres. Once made the conjunction is irretrievable and in its own measure exact. Two ideas or images about death — the living and the dead — have been associated, and are now permanently fused. If the mind is a rag-bag, pull out two rags and sew them together. If the materials were contradictory, the very contradiction, made permanent, becomes a kind of unison. By associating ambiguities found in nature in a poem we reach a clarity, a kind of transfiguration even, whereby we learn *what* the ambiguity was.

The point is, that the oddity of association would not have its effect without the couplets which conclude each stanza with the pungency of good epitaphs. Without the couplets the association would sink from wit to low humor or simple description. What, then, do the couplets mean?

Either, or both, of two things. In the more obvious sense, "Let be be finale of seem," in the first stanza, means, take what ever seems to be, as really being; and in the second stanza, "Let the lamp affix its beam," means let it be plain that this woman is dead, that these things, impossibly ambiguous as they may be, are as they are. In this case, "The only emperor is the emperor of ice-cream," implies in both stanzas that the only power worth heeding is the power of the moment, of what is passing, of the flux.

The less obvious sense of the couplets is more difficult to set down because, in all its difference, it rises out of the first sense, and while contradicting and supplanting, yet guarantees it. The connotation is, perhaps, that ice-cream and what it represents is the only power *heeded*, not the only power there is to heed. The irony recoils on itself: what seems *shall* finally be; the lamp *shall* affix its beam. The only emperor is the emperor of ice-cream. The king is dead; long live the king.

The virtue of the poem is that it discusses and settles these matters without mentioning them. The wit of the couplets does the work.

Allied to the method of this poem is the method of much of "Le Monocle de mon Oncle." The light word is used with a more serious effect than the familiar, heavy words commonly chosen in poems about the nature of love. I take these lines from the first stanza (page 16):

> The sea of spuming thought foists up again
> The radiant bubble that she was. And then
> A deep up-pouring from some saltier well
> Within me, bursts its watery syllable.

The words foist and bubble are in origin and have remained in usage both light. One comes from a word meaning to palm false dice, and the other is derived by imitation from a gesture of the mouth. Whether the history of the words was present in Mr. Stevens' mind when he chose them is imma-

terial; the pristine flavour is still active by tradition and is what gives the rare taste to the lines quoted. By employing them in connection with a sea of spuming thought and the notion of radiance whatever vulgarity was in the two words is purged. They gain force while they lend their own lightness to the context; and I think it is the lightness of these words that permits and conditions the second sentence in the quotation, by making the contrast between the foisted bubble and the bursting syllable possible.

Stanza IV of the same poem (pages 17–18) has a serious trope in which apples and skulls, love and death, are closely associated in subtle and vivid language. An apple, Mr. Stevens says, is as good as any skull to read because, like the skull, it finally rots away in the ground. The stanza ends with these lines:

> But it excels in this, that as the fruit
> Of love, it is a book too mad to read
> Before one merely reads to pass the time.

The light elegance and conversational tone give the stanza the cumulative force of understatement, and make it seem to carry a susurrous of irony between the lines. The word excels has a good deal to do with the success of the passage; superficially a syntactical word as much as anything else, actually, by its literal sense it saves the lines from possible triviality.

We have been considering poems where the light tone increases the gravity of the substance, and where an atmosphere of wit and elegance assures poignancy of meaning. It is only a step or so further to that use of language where tone and atmosphere are very nearly equivalent to substance and meaning themselves. "Sea Surface Full of Clouds" (page 132) has many lines and several images in its five sections which contribute by their own force to the sense of the poem, but it would be very difficult to attach special importance to

any one of them. The burden of the poem is the colour and tone of the whole. It is as near a tone-poem, in the musical sense, as language can come. The sense of single lines cannot profitably be abstracted from the context, and literal analysis does nothing but hinder understanding. We may say, if we like, that Mr. Stevens found himself in ecstasy — that he stood aside from himself emotionally — before the spectacle of endlessly varied appearances of California seas off Tehuantepec; and that he has tried to equal the complexity of what he saw in the technical intricacy of his poem. But that is all we can say. Neither the material of the poem nor what we get out of it is by nature susceptible of direct treatment in words. It might at first seem more a painter's subject than a poet's, because its interest is more obviously visual and formal than mental. Such an assumption would lead to apt criticism if Mr. Stevens had tried, in his words, to present a series of seascapes with a visual atmosphere to each picture. His intention was quite different and germane to poetry; he wanted to present the tone, in the mind, of five different aspects of the sea. The strictly visual form is in the background, merely indicated by the words; it is what the visual form gave off after it had been felt in the mind that concerned him. Only by the precise interweaving of association and suggestion, by the development of a delicate verbal pattern, could he secure the overtones that possessed him. A looser form would have captured nothing.

The choice of certain elements in the poem may seem arbitrary, but it is an arbitrariness without reference to their rightness and wrongness. That is, any choice would have been equally arbitrary, and, aesthetically, equally right. In the second stanza of each section, for example, one is reminded of different kinds of chocolate and different shades of green, thus: rosy chocolate and paradisal green; chophouse chocolate and sham-like green; porcelain chocolate and uncertain green; musky chocolate and too-fluent green;

chinese chocolate and motley green. And each section gives us umbrellas variously gilt, sham, pied, frail, and large. The ocean is successively a machine which is perplexed, tense, tranced, dry, and obese. The ocean produces seablooms from the clouds, mortal massives of the blooms of water, silver petals of white blooms, figures of the clouds like blooms, and, finally, a wind of green blooms. These items, and many more, repeated and modified, at once impervious to and merging each in the other, make up the words of the poem. Directly they do nothing but rouse the small sensations and smaller feelings of atmosphere and tone. The poem itself, what it means, is somewhere in the background; we know it through the tone. The motley hue we see is crisped to "clearing opalescence."

> Then the sea
> And heaven rolled as one and from the two
> Came fresh transfigurings of freshest blue.

Here we have words used as a tone of feeling to secure the discursive evanescence of appearances; words bringing the senses into the mind which they created; the establishment of interior experience by the construction of its tone in words. In "Tattoo" (page 108), we have the opposite effect, where the mind is intensified in a simple visual image. The tone existed beforehand, so to speak, in the nature of the subject.

> The light is like a spider.
> It crawls over the water.
> It crawls over the edges of the snow.
> It crawls under your eyelids
> And spreads its webs there —
> Its two webs.
>
> The webs of your eyes
> Are fastened
> To the flesh and bones of you
> As to rafters or grass.

There are filaments of your eyes
On the surface of the water
And in the edges of the snow.

The problem of language here hardly existed: the words make the simplest of statements, and the poet had only to avoid dramatising what was already drama in itself, the sensation of the eyes in contact with what they looked at. By attempting *not* to set up a tone the tone of truth is secured for statements literally false. Fairy tales and Mother Goose use the same language. Because there is no point where the statements stop being true, they leap the gap unnoticed between literal truth and imaginative truth. It is worth observing that the strong sensual quality of the poem is defined without the use of a single sensual word; and it is that ambiguity between the words and their subject which makes the poem valuable.

There is nothing which has been said so far about Mr. Stevens' uses of language which might not have been said, with different examples, of any good poet equally varied and equally erudite[2] — by which I mean intensely careful of effects. We have been dealing with words primarily, and words are not limited either to an author or a subject. Hence they form unique data and are to be understood and commented on by themselves. You can hardly more compare two poets' use of a word than you can compare, profitably, trees

[2] See *Words and Idioms*, by Logan Pearsall Smith, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1926, page 121. "One of the great defects of our critical vocabulary is the lack of a neutral, non-derogatory name for these great artificers, these artists who derive their inspiration more from the formal than the emotional aspects of their art, and who are more interested in the masterly control of their material, than in the expression of their own feelings, or the prophetic aspects of their calling." Mr. Smith then suggests the use of the words erudite and erudition and gives as reason their derivation "from *erudire* (*E* "out of," and *rudis*, "rude," "rough," or "raw"), a verb meaning in classical latin to bring out of the rough, to form by means of art, to polish, to instruct." Mr. Stevens is such an *erudite;* though he is often more, when he deals with emotional matters as if they were matters for *erudition.*

to cyclones. Synonyms are accidental, superficial, and never genuine. Comparison begins to be possible at the level of more complicated tropes than may occur in single words.

Let us compare then, for the sake of distinguishing the kinds of import, certain tropes taken from Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot, and Mr. Stevens.

From Mr. Pound — the first and third from the *Cantos* and the second from *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley:*

> In the gloom, the gold gathers the light against it.
>
> Tawn foreshores
> Washed in the cobalt of oblivion.
>
> A catalogue, his jewels of conversation.

From T. S. Eliot — one from *Prufrock*, one from *The Waste-land*, and one from *Ash Wednesday:*

> I should have been a pair of ragged claws
> Scuttling across the floors of silent seas.
>
> The awful daring of a moment's surrender
> Which an age of prudence can never retract.
>
> Struggling with the devil of the stairs who wears
> The deceitful face of hope and of despair.

The unequalled versatility of Ezra Pound (Eliot in a dedication addresses him as *Il Miglior Fabbro*) prevents assurance that the three lines quoted from him are typical of all his work. At least they are characteristic of his later verse, and the kind of feeling they exhibit may be taken as Pound's own. Something like their effect may be expected in reading a good deal of his work.

The first thing to be noticed is that the first two tropes are visual images — not physical observation, but something to be seen in the mind's eye; and that as the images are so seen their meaning is exhausted. The third trope while not

directly visual acts as if it were. What differentiates all three from physical observation is in each case the nonvisual associations of a single word — *gathers*, which in the active voice has an air of intention; *oblivion*, which has the purely mental sense of forgetfulness; and less, obviously, *conversation*, in the third trope, which while it helps *jewels* to give the line a visual quality it does not literally possess, also acts to condense in the line a great many non-visual associations.

The lines quoted from T. S. Eliot are none of them in intention visual; they deal with a totally different realm of experience — the realm in which the mind dramatises, at a given moment, its feelings towards a whole aspect of life. The emotion with which these lines charge the reader's mind is a quality of emotion which has so surmounted the senses as to require no longer the support of direct contact with them. Abstract words have reached the intensity of thought and feeling where the senses have been condensed into abstraction. The first distich is an impossible statement which in its context is terrifying. The language has sensual elements but as such they mean nothing: it is the act of abstract dramatisation which counts. In the second and third distichs words such as *surrender* and *prudence*, *hope and despair*, assume, by their dramatisation, a definite sensual force.

Both Eliot and Pound condense; their best verse is weighted — Pound's with sensual experience primarily, and Eliot's with beliefs. Where the mind's life is concerned the senses produce images, and beliefs produce dramatic cries. The condensation is important.

Mr. Stevens' tropes, in his best work and where he is most characteristic, are neither visual like Pound nor dramatic like Eliot. The scope and reach of his verse are no less but are different. His visual images never condense the matter of his poems; they either accent or elaborate it. His dramatic statements, likewise, tend rather to give another, perhaps

more final, form to what has already been put in different language.

The best evidence of these differences is the fact that it is almost impossible to quote anything short of a stanza from Mr. Stevens without essential injustice to the meaning. His kind of condensation, too, is very different in character and degree from Eliot and Pound. Little details are left in the verse to show what it is he has condensed. And occasionally, in order to make the details fit into the poem, what has once been condensed is again elaborated. It is this habit of slight re-elaboration which gives the firm textural quality to the verse.

Another way of contrasting Mr. Stevens' kind of condensation with those of Eliot and Pound will emerge if we remember Mr. Stevens' *intentional* ambiguity. Any observation, as between the observer and what is observed, is the notation of an ambiguity. To Mr. Stevens the sky, "the basal slate," "the universal hue," which surrounds us and is always upon us is the great ambiguity. Mr. Stevens associates two or more such observations so as to accent their ambiguities. But what is ambiguous in the association is not the same as in the things associated; it is something new, and it has the air of something condensed. This is the quality that makes his poems grow, rise in the mind like a tide. The poems cannot be exhausted, because the words that make them, intentionally ambiguous at their crucial points, are themselves inexhaustible. Eliot obtains many of his effects by the sharpness of surprise, Pound his by visual definition; they tend to exhaust their words in the individual use, and they are successful because they know when to stop, they know when sharpness and definition lay most hold on their subjects, they know the maximal limit of their kinds of condensation. Mr. Stevens is just as precise in his kind; he brings ambiguity to the point of sharpness, of reality, without destroying, but rather preserving, clarified, the ambiguity. It is a difference

in subject matter, and a difference in accent. Mr. Stevens makes you aware of how much is *already* condensed in any word.

The first stanza of "Sunday Morning" may be quoted (page 89). It should be remembered that the title is an integral part of the poem, directly affecting the meaning of many lines and generally controlling the atmosphere of the whole.

> Complacencies of the peignoir, and late
> Coffee and oranges in a sunny chair,
> And the green freedom of a cockatoo
> Upon a rug mingle to dissipate
> The holy hush of ancient sacrifice.
> She dreams a little, and she feels the dark
> Encroachment of that old catastrophe,
> As a calm darkens among water-lights.
> The pungent oranges and bright, green wings
> Seem things in some procession of the dead,
> Winding across wide water, without sound.
> The day is like wide water, without sound,
> Stilled for the passing of her dreaming feet
> Over the seas, to silent Palestine,
> Dominion of the blood and sepulchre.

A great deal of ground is covered in these fifteen lines, and the more the slow ease and conversational elegance of the verse are observed, the more wonder it seems that so much could have been indicated without the least strain. Visually, we have a woman enjoying her Sunday morning breakfast in a sunny room with a green rug. The image is secured, however, not as in Pound's image about the gold gathering the light against it, in directly visual terms, but by the almost casual combination of visual images with such phrases as "*complacencies* of the peignoir," and "the green *freedom* of the cockatoo," where the italicised words are abstract in essence but rendered concrete in combination. More important, the purpose of the images is to show how they dissipate

the "holy hush of ancient sacrifice," that the natural comfort of the body is aware but mostly unheeding of that Sunday is the Lord's day and that it commemorates the crucifixion.

From her half awareness she feels the more keenly the "old catastrophe" merging in the surroundings, subtly, but deeply, changing them as a "calm darkens among water-lights." The feeling is dark in her mind, darkens, changing, the whole day. The oranges and the rug and the day all have the quality of "wide water, without sound," and all her thoughts, so loaded, turn on the crucifixion.

The transit of the body's feeling from attitude to attitude is managed in the medium of three water images. These images do not replace the "complacencies of the peignoir," nor change them; they act as a kind of junction between them and the Christian feeling traditionally proper to the day. By the time the stanza is over the water images have embodied both feelings. In their own way they make a condensation by appearing in company with and showing what was already condensed.

If this stanza is compared with the tropes quoted from Pound, the principal difference will perhaps seem that while Pound's lines define their own meaning and may stand alone, Mr. Stevens' various images are separately incomplete and, on the other hand, taken together, have a kind of completeness to which Pound's lines may not pretend: everything to which they refer is present. Pound's images exist without syntax, Mr. Stevens' depend on it. Pound's images are formally simple, Mr. Stevens' complex. The one contains a mystery, and the other, comparatively, expounds a mystery.

While it would be possible to find analogues to Eliot's tropes in the stanzas of "Sunday Morning," it will be more profitable to examine something more germane in spirit. Search is difficult and choice uncertain, for Mr. Stevens is not a dramatic poet. Instead of dramatising his feelings, he takes as fatal the drama that he sees and puts it down either in its least dramatic, most meditative form, or makes of it a

simple statement. Let us then frankly take as pure a meditation as may be found, "The Snow Man" (page 12), where, again, the title is integrally part of the poem:

> One must have a mind of winter
> To regard the frost and the boughs
> Of the pine-trees crusted with snow;
>
> And to have been cold a long time
> To behold the junipers shagged with ice,
> The spruces rough in the distant glitter
>
> Of the January sun; and not to think
> Of any misery in the sound of the wind,
> In the sound of a few leaves,
>
> Which is the sound of the land
> Full of the same wind
> That is blowing in the same bare place
>
> For the listener, who listens in the snow,
> And, nothing himself, beholds
> Nothing that is not there and the nothing that is.

The last three lines are as near as Mr. Stevens comes to the peculiar dramatic emotion which characterises the three tropes quoted from Eliot. Again, as in the passage compared to Pound's images, the effect of the last three lines depends entirely on what preceded them. The emotion is built up from chosen fragments and is then stated in its simplest form. The statement has the force of emotional language but it remains a statement — a modest declaration of circumstance. The abstract word *nothing*, three times repeated, is not in effect abstract at all; it is synonymous with the data about the winter landscape which went before. The part which is not synonymous is the emotion: the overtone of the word, and the burden of the poem. Eliot's lines,

> The awful daring of a moment's surrender
> Which an age of prudence can never retract,

like Pound's lines, for different reasons, stand apart and on their own feet. The two poets work in contrary modes. Eliot places a number of things side by side. The relation is seldom syntactical or logical, but is usually internal and sometimes, so far as the reader is concerned, fatal and accidental. He works in violent contrasts and produces as much by prestidigitation as possible. There was no reason in the rest of *Purfrock* why the lines about the pair of ragged claws should have appeared where they did and no reason, perhaps, why they should have appeared at all; but once they appeared they became for the reader irretrievable, complete in themselves, and completing the structure of the poem.

That is the method of a dramatic poet, who moulds wholes out of parts themselves autonomous. Mr. Stevens, not a dramatic poet, seizes his wholes only in imagination; in his poems the parts are already connected. Eliot usually moves from point to point or between two termini. Mr. Stevens as a rule ends where he began; only when he is through, his beginning has become a chosen end. The differences may be exaggerated but in their essence is a true contrast.

If a digression may be permitted, I think it may be shown that the different types of obscurity found in the three poets are only different aspects of their modes of writing. In Pound's verse, aside from words in languages the reader does not know, most of the hard knots are tied round combinations of classical and historical references. A passage in one of the *Cantos*, for example, works up at the same time the adventures of a Provençal poet and the events in one of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. If the reader is acquainted with the details of both stories, he can appreciate the criticism in Pound's combination. Otherwise he will remain confused: he will be impervious to the plain facts of the verse.

Eliot's poems furnish examples of a different kind of reference to and use of history and past literature. The reader must be familiar with the ideas and the beliefs and

systems of feeling to which Eliot alludes or from which he borrows, rather than to the facts alone. Eliot does not restrict himself to criticism; he digests what he takes; but the reader must know what it is that has been digested before he can appreciate the result. The Holy Grail material in *The Waste-land* is an instance: like Tiresias, this material is a dramatic element in the poem.

Mr. Stevens' difficulties to the normal reader present themselves in the shape of seemingly impenetrable words or phrases which no wedge of knowledge brought from outside the body of Mr. Stevens' own poetry can help much to split. The wedge, if any, is in the words themselves, either in the instance alone or in relation to analogous instances in the same or other poems in the book. Two examples should suffice.

In "Sunday Morning," there is in the seventh stanza (page 93) a reference to the sun, to which men shall chant their devotion —

> Not as a god, but as a god might be,
> Naked among them, like a savage source.
> Their chant shall be a chant of paradise,
> Out of their blood, returning to the sky; . . .

Depending upon the reader this will or will not be obscure. But in any case, the full weight of the lines is not felt until the conviction of the poet that the sun is origin and ending for all life is shared by the reader. That is why the god might be naked among them. It takes only reading of the stanza, the poem, and other poems where the fertility of the sun is celebrated, to make the notion sure. The only bit of outside information that might help is the fact that in an earlier version this stanza concluded the poem. — In short, generally, you need only the dictionary and familiarity with the poem in question to clear up a good part of Mr. Stevens' obscurities.

The second example is taken from "The Man whose Pharynx was Bad" (page 128):

> Perhaps, if winter once could penetrate
> Through all its purples to the final slate.

Here, to obtain the full meaning, we have only to consult the sixth stanza of "Le Monocle de mon Oncle" (page 18):

> If men at forty will be painting lakes
> The ephemeral blues must merge for them in one,
> The basic slate, the universal hue.
> There is a substance in us that prevails.

Mr. Stevens has a notion often intimated that the sky is the only permanent background for thought and knowledge; he would see things against the sky as a Christian would see them against the cross. The blue of the sky is the prevailing substance of the sky, and to Mr. Stevens it seems only necessary to look at the sky to share and be shared in its blueness.

If I have selected fairly types of obscurity from these poets, it should be clear that whereas the obscurities of Eliot and Pound are intrinsic difficulties of the poems, to which the reader must come well armed with specific sorts of external knowledge and belief, the obscurities of Mr. Stevens clarify themselves to the intelligence alone. Mode and value are different — not more or less valuable, but different. And all result from the concentrated language which is the medium of poetry. The three poets load their words with the maximum content; naturally, the poems remain obscure until the reader takes out what the poet puts in. What still remains will be the essential impenetrability of words, the bottomlessness of knowledge. To these the reader, like the poet, must submit.

Returning, this time without reference to Pound and Eliot, among the varieties of Mr. Stevens' tropes we find some

worth notice which comparison will not help. In "Le Monocle de mon Oncle," the ninth stanza (page 20), has nothing logically to do with the poem; it neither develops the subject nor limits it, but is rather a rhetorical interlude set in the poem's midst. Yet it is necessary to the poem, because its rhetoric, boldly announced as such, expresses the feeling of the poet towards his poem, and that feeling, once expressed, becomes incorporated in the poem.

> In verses wild with motion, full of din,
> Loudened by cries, by clashes, quick and sure
> As the deadly thought of men accomplishing
> Their curious fates in war, come, celebrate
> The faith of forty, ward of Cupido.
> Most venerable heart, the lustiest conceit
> Is not too lusty for your broadening.
> I quiz all sounds, all thoughts, all everything
> For the music and manner of the paladins
> To make oblation fit. Where shall I find
> Bravura adequate to this great hymn?

It is one of the advantages of a non-dramatic, meditative style, that pure rhetoric may be introduced into a poem without injuring its substance. The structure of the poem is, so to speak, a structure of loose ends, spliced only verbally, joined only by the sequence in which they appear. What might be fustian ornament in a dramatic poem, in a meditative poem casts a feeling far from fustian over the whole, and the slighter the relation of the rhetorical interlude to the substance of the whole, the more genuine is the feeling cast. The rhetoric does the same thing that the action does in a dramatic poem, or the events in a narrative poem; it produces an apparent medium in which the real substance may be borne.

Such rhetoric is not reserved to set interludes; it often occurs in lines not essentially rhetorical at all. Sometimes it gives life to a serious passage and cannot be separated with-

out fatal injury to the poem. Then it is the trick without which the poem would fall flat entirely. Two poems occur where the rhetoric is the vital trope — "A High-Toned Old Christian Woman" (page 79), and "Bantams in Pine-Woods" (page 101), which I quote entire:

> Chieftain Iffucan of Azcan in caftan
> Of tan with henna hackles, halt!
>
> Damned universal cock, as if the sun
> Was blackamoor to bear your blazing tail.
>
> Fat! Fat! Fat! I am the personal.
> Your world is you. I am my world.
>
> You ten-foot poet among inchlings. Fat!
> Begone! An inchling bristles in these pines,
>
> Bristles, and points their Appalachian tangs,
> And fears not portly Azcan nor his hoos.

The first and last distichs are gauds of rhetoric; nevertheless they give not only the tone but the substance to the poem. If the reader is deceived by the rhetoric and believes the poem is no more than a verbal plaything, he ought not to read poetry except as a plaything. With a different object, Mr. Stevens' rhetoric is as ferociously comic as the rhetoric in Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*, and as serious. The ability to handle rhetoric so as to reach the same sort of intense condensation that is secured in bare, non-rhetorical language is very rare, and since what rhetoric can condense is very valuable it ought to receive the same degree of attention as any other use of language. Mr. Stevens' successful attempts in this direction are what make him technically most interesting. Simple language, dealing obviously with surds, draws emotion out of feelings; rhetorical language, dealing rather, or apparently, with inflections, employed with the same seriousness, creates a surface *equivalent* to an emotion by its ap-

proximately complete escape from the purely communicative function of language.[3]

We have seen in a number of examples that Mr. Stevens uses language in several different ways, either separately or in combination; and I have tried to imply that his success is due largely to his double adherence to words and experience as existing apart from his private sensibility. His great labour has been to allow the reality of what he felt personally to pass into the superior impersonal reality of words. Such a transformation amounts to an access of knowledge, as it raises to a condition where it may be rehearsed and understood in permanent form that body of emotional and sensational experience which in its natural condition makes life a torment and confusion.

With the technical data partly in hand, it ought now to be possible to fill out the picture, touch upon the knowledge itself, in Mr. Stevens' longest and most important poem, "The Comedian as the Letter C." Everywhere characteristic of Mr. Stevens' style and interests, it has the merit of difficulty — difficulty which when solved rewards the reader beyond his hopes of clarity.

Generally speaking the poem deals with the sensations and images, notions and emotions, ideas and meditations, sensual adventures and introspective journeyings of a protagonist called Crispin. More precisely, the poem expounds the shifting of a man's mind between sensual experience and its imaginative interpretation, the struggle, in that mind, of the imagination for sole supremacy and the final slump or ascent

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[3] There is a point at which rhetorical language resumes its communicative function. In the second of "Six Significant Landscapes" (page 98), we have this image.

> A pool shines
> Like a bracelet
> Shaken at a dance,

which is a result of the startling associations induced by an ornamental, social, rhetorical style in dealing with nature. The image perhaps needs its context to assure its quality.

where the mind contents itself with interpreting plain and common things. In short, we have a meditation, with instances, of man's struggle with nature. The first line makes the theme explicit: "Nota: man is the intelligence of his soil, the sovereign ghost." Later, the theme is continued in reverse form: "His soil is man's intelligence." Later still, the soil is qualified as suzerain, which means sovereign over a semi-independent or internally autonomous state; and finally, at the end of the poem, the sovereignty is still further reduced when it turns out that the imagination can make nothing better of the world (here called a turnip), than the same insoluble lump it was in the beginning.

The poem is in six parts of about four pages each. A summary may replace pertinent discussion and at the same time preclude extraneous discussion. In Part I, called the World without Imagination, Crispin, who previously had cultivated a small garden with his intelligence, finds himself at sea, "a skinny sailor peering in the sea-glass." At first at loss and "washed away by magnitude," Crispin, "merest minuscule in the gales," at last finds the sea a vocable thing,

> But with a speech belched out of hoary darks
> Noway resembling his, a visible thing,
> And excepting negligible Triton, free
> From the unavoidable shadow of himself
> That elsewhere lay around him.

The sea "was no help before reality," only "one vast subjugating final tone," before which Crispin was made new. Concomitantly, with and because of his vision of the sea, "The drenching of stale lives no more fell down."

Part II is called Concerning the Thunder-Storms of Yucatan, and there, in Yucatan, Crispin, a man made vivid by the sea, found his apprehensions enlarged and felt the need to fill his senses. He sees and hears all there is before him, and writes fables for himself

Of an aesthetic tough, diverse, untamed,
Incredible to prudes, the mint of dirt,
Green barbarism turned paradigm.

The sea had liberated his senses, and he discovers an earth like "A jostling festival of seeds grown fat, too juicily opulent," and a "new reality in parrot squawks." His education is interrupted when a wind "more terrible than the revenge of music on bassoons," brings on a tropical thunder-storm. Crispin, "this connoisseur of elemental fate," identifies himself with the storm, finding himself free, which he was before, and "more than free, elate, intent, profound and studious" of a new self:

the thunder, lapsing in its clap
Let down gigantic quavers of its voice
For Crispin to vociferate again.

With such freedom taken from the sea and such power found in the storm, Crispin is ready for the world of the imagination. Naturally, then, the third part of the poem, called Approaching Carolina, is a chapter in the book of moonlight, and Crispin "a faggot in the lunar fire." Moonlight is imagination, a reflection or interpretation of the sun, which is the source of life. It is also, curiously, this moonlight, North America, and specifically one of the Carolinas. And the Carolinas, to Crispin, seemed north; even the spring seemed arctic. He meditates on the poems he has denied himself because they gave less than "the relentless contact he desired." Perhaps the moon would establish the necessary liaison between himself and his environment. But perhaps not. It seemed

Illusive, faint, more mist than moon, perverse,
Wrong as a divagation to Peking. . . .
The moonlight was an evasion, or, if not,
A minor meeting, facile, delicate.

So he considers, and teeters back and forth, between the sun and moon. For the moment he decides against the moon

and imagination in favour of the sun and his senses. The senses, instanced by the smell of things at the river wharf where his vessel docks, "round his rude aesthetic out" and teach him "how much of what he saw he never saw at all."

> He gripped more closely the essential prose
> As being, in a world so falsified,
> The one integrity for him, the one
> Discovery still possible to make,
> To which all poems were incident, unless
> That prose should wear a poem's guise at last.

In short, Crispin conceives that if the experience of the senses is but well enough known, the knowledge takes the form of imagination after all. So we find as the first line of the fourth part, called The Idea of a Colony, "Nota: his soil is man's intelligence," which reverses the original statement that man is the intelligence of his soil. With the new distinction illuminating his mind, Crispin plans a colony, and asks himself whether the purpose of his pilgrimage is not

> to drive away
> The shadows of his fellows from the skies,
> And, from their stale intelligence released,
> To make a new intelligence prevail?

The rest of the fourth part is a long series of synonymous tropes stating instances of the new intelligence. In a torment of fastidious thought, Crispin writes a prologomena for his colony. Everything should be understood for what it is and should follow the urge of its given character. The spirit of things should remain spirit and play as it will.

> The man in Georgia waking among pines
> Should be pine-spokesman. The responsive man,
> Planting his pristine cores in Florida,
> Should prick thereof, not on the psaltery,
> But on the banjo's categorical gut.

And as for Crispin's attitude toward nature, "the melon should have apposite ritual" and the peach its incantation.

These "commingled souvenirs and prophecies," — all images of freedom and the satisfaction of instinct,— compose Crispin's idea of a colony. He banishes the masquerade of thought and expunges dreams; the ideal takes no form from these. Crispin will be content to "let the rabbit run, the cock declaim."

In Part V, which is A Nice Shady Home, Crispin dwells in the land, contented and a hermit, continuing his observations with diminished curiosity. His discovery that his colony has fallen short of his plan and that he is content to have it fall short, content to build a cabin,

> who once had planned
> Loquacious columns by the ructive sea,

leads him to ask whether he should not become a philosopher instead of a coloniser.

> Should he lay by the personal and make
> Of his own fate an instance of all fate?

The question is rhetorical, but before it can answer itself, Crispin, sapped by the quotidian, sapped by the sun, has no energy for questions, and is content to realise, that for all the sun takes

> it gives a humped return
> Exchequering from piebald fiscs unkeyed.

Part VI, called And Daughters with Curls, explains the implications of the last quoted lines. The sun, and all the new intelligence which it enriched, mulcted the man Crispin, and in return gave him four daughters, four questioners and four sure answerers. He has been brought back to social nature, has gone to seed. The connoisseur of elemental fate has become himself an instance of all fate. He does not know whether the return was "Anabasis or slump, ascent or chute." His cabin — that is the existing symbol of his colony — seems now a phylactery, a sacred relic or amulet he might wear in memorial to his idea, in which his daughters shall

grow up, bidders and biders for the ecstasies of the world, to repeat his pilgrimage, and come, no doubt, in their own cabins, to the same end.

Then Crispin invents his doctrine and clothes it in the fable about the turnip:

> The world, a turnip once so readily plucked,
> Sacked up and carried overseas, daubed out
> Of its ancient purple, pruned to the fertile main,
> And sown again by the stiffest realist,
> Came reproduced in purple, family font,
> The same insoluble lump. The fatalist
> Stepped in and dropped the chuckling down his craw,
> Without grace or grumble.

But suppose the anecdote was false, and Crispin a profitless philosopher,

> Glozing his life with after-shining flicks,
> Illuminating, from a fancy gorged
> By apparition, plain and common things,
> Sequestering the fluster from the year,
> Making gulped potions from obstreperous drops,
> And so distorting, proving what he proves
> Is nothing, what can all this matter since
> The relation comes, benignly, to its end.
>
> So may the relation of each man be clipped.

The legend or subject of the poem and the mythology it develops are hardly new nor are the instances, intellectually considered, very striking. But both the clear depth of conception and the extraordinary luxuriance of rhetoric and image in which it is expressed, should be at least suggested in the summary here furnished. Mr. Stevens had a poem with an abstract subject — man as an instance of fate, — and a concrete experience — the sensual confusion in which the man is waylaid; — and to combine them he had to devise a form suitable to his own peculiar talent. The simple statement — of which he is a master — could not be prolonged to

meet the dimensions of his subject. To the dramatic style his talents were unsuitable, and if by chance he used it, it would prevent both the meditative mood and the accent of intellectual wit which he needed to make the subject his own. The form he used is as much his own and as adequate, as the form of *Paradise Lost* is Milton's or the form of *The Waste-land* is Eliot's. And as Milton's form filled the sensibility of one aspect of his age, Mr. Stevens' form fits part of the sensibility — a part which Eliot or Pound or Yeats do little to touch — of our own age.

I do not know a name for the form. It is largely the form of rhetoric language used for its own sake, persuasively to the extreme. But it has, for rhetoric, an extraordinary content of concrete experience. Mr. Stevens is a genuine poet in that he attempts constantly to transform what is felt with the senses and what is thought in the mind — if we can still distinguish the two — into that realm of being, which we call poetry, where what is thought is felt and what is felt has the strict point of thought. And I call his mode of achieving that transformation rhetorical because it is not lyric or dramatic or epic, because it does not transcend its substance, but is a reflection upon a hard surface, a shining mirror of rhetoric.

In its nature depending so much on tone and atmosphere, accenting precise management of ambiguities, and dealing with the subtler inflections of simple feelings, the elements of the form cannot be tracked down and put in order. Perhaps the title of the whole poem, "The Comedian as the Letter C," is as good an example as any where several of the elements can be found together. The letter C is, of course, Crispin, and he is called a letter because he is small (he is referred to as "merest minuscule," which means small letter, in the first part of the poem) and though because, though small, like a letter he stands for something — his colony, cabin, and children — as a comedian. He is a comedian because he deals finally with the quotidian (the old distinction of comedy and

tragedy was between every day and heroic subject matter), gorged with apparition, illuminating plain and common things. But what he deals with is not comic; the comedy, in that sense, is restricted to his perception and does not touch the things perceived or himself. The comedy is the accent, the play of the words. He is at various times a realist, a clown, a philosopher, a coloniser, a father, a faggot in the lunar fire, and so on. In sum, and any sum is hypothetical, he may be a comedian in both senses, but separately never. He is the hypothesis of comedy. He is a piece of rhetoric — a persona in words — exemplifying all these characters, and summing, or masking, in his persuasive style, the essential prose he read. He is the poem's guise that the prose wears at last.

Such is the title of the poem, and such is the poem itself. Mr. Stevens has created a surface, a texture, a rhetoric in which his feelings and thoughts are preserved in what amounts to a new sensibility. The contrast between his subjects — the apprehension of all the sensual aspects of nature as instances of fate, — and the form in which the subjects are expressed is what makes his poetry valuable. Nature becomes nothing but words and to a poet words are everything.

R. P. Blackmur

SIX POEMS FOR THE SHERIFF'S DAUGHTER

Of Hugo in Colorado the sheriff's daughter,
Of mesas vair, of watery canyons —

i

. . . and with Mike the Silurist in El Centro
Hunched in a sandstorm watching the desert reel
Across the crazy square past the New York Store
And clatter back to hell at the other end of town . . .

'Caléxico (he said), in Caléxico
'There was whiskers on the beer. I tell you, there was
'Whiskers (he said), whiskers on it. Listen: ever feel
'Gut-gnawed? o. k.: across to Mexicali, they call
'It *cerveza* there, I sings out: "Give ear, O Mexico —
'"*Tres cervezas pronto:* one for me, see? and one for me, and
'"One for the sheriff's daughter. . ." This cochí sags along
the wall
'Scratching around in his pants: *Señó, se pué. . . ?*
'I know what he wants, christ it's what they all
'Want. "*Naã. . .*" He grunts something; says I, sharp,
"*Cuál?*"
'Says he: "Last night I was a King of Spain,
'"Tonight no king am I." — "Listen," I says,
'"Let me hear that again, you goat-crotched —"'
, cerveza!
[for I was
Wroth out of measure, I was wellnigh wood for wrath: because

MORENO'S SHOES ARE HALF THE FUN OF HAVING
FEET
MORENO'S SHOES ARE HALF THE FUN OF HAVING
FEET
Then Sid Grauman came back. Oy did Sid come back!
Whorls of kleiglights yanked the sky loose over Hollywood-
land
(Oh stand with me upon the hills of Hollywoodland)
And Sunset Boulevard yowled and the bands yowled and
Marines trampled the Kansas fans and
The fans yowled and somebody lamped
Joan Crawford (*may our friendship be*)
And died, pop-eyed, for ecstasy
And everywhere
Blare of lights milling & canvas WELCOME HOME SID
arches he'd payed for out of his own
Pocket: Sid Grauman's returning paunch electrifies the street
OF HAVING FEET
They called it the Hollywood *If*.]

The guard down at Yuma claimed Mike was an An-
archist.
Mike cursed like hell. Anyhow, he missed
The fun. He's in jail for a Proletarianist.

ii

Jesús María Gómez: A NUESTROS CONSUMIDORES
The R. F. Distillery Co.,
S. A., of C. Juárez, Chih., México
TO OUR PATRONS:
Greeting & peace and length of days.

Debido á las numerosas imita-
Ciones de nuestro whiskey envasa-

Do en botellas semejantes á las
Nuestras
Hemos dejado
Hemos dejado
Hemos dejado de seguir
Empleando
La antigua forma de nuestra botella.

J. M. Gómez.

Last night J M Gómez was three times King of Spain,
Tonight no king. He has heard the Goth spears under
These bitter mountains, the wheeling thunder
Gyred up from chariots of circling thousands.
Last night there was music through Alcalá
In the King's hall. Whose face tonight in the music,
Gaunt beyond dreaming? What loneliness
Alcalá Alcalá was like this loneliness?
He walks alone on the hills over Alcalá
On the jut of the old parapet, somewhat distant
From the deserted beach, yet within hearing
Long roll and ebb of the surf. But they gathering
Tonight are spearmen, grey, brittle in the sad moon;
The wind from the sea has drowned their voices, their eyes
Drawn loose in mists. Pass through them, so:
These are all ghosts —
, but is it nothing?

Some, clean in these underwinds, have stood
With shining hair upon this parapet,
And one walked here at sunrise with his ghosts
And all day long the horns burned savage golden
And towards dusk watched the dun shadows lengthen
Eastward: and evening glowed in Alcalá
And his heart broke.
. . . *but, nothing? nothing?*

Ah Lord Christ! — Tell me, you of the Mesa,
Men of Acoma, you knowing the desert, how silently
Loneliness numbed you also: is there enchantment
There, that your ruins burn
In faint outline against the wasted hills?
Is there not sometimes music there that fills
Your empty streets? to which whose heart returns
Oftener than His heart Who of His love
Abandoned you!
Tonight there is no singing,
Only the dead stars move.
[and she was swinging
Her arms wild-like, and caught her Ma on the snout:
Aimée's a good girl, it's much ado about
Not much; and at Agua Caliente the rich
Murphy from L. A. addressed the Governor
Inelegantly & with some precision, *viz:*
You greasy son of a bitch; so to Ensenada
The army hastened in three ford trucks to mind
The District Chair so romantically resigned;
And lay on the beach of Todos-Santos, dead,
Who was the fairest gringo co-ed,
Knifed fifteen times and left in the also dead
Embrace of next-year's basketball captain;
HEMOS
DEJADO
Sid Grauman's back: *Olé!*
the hordes
Mass at the livid stream (*quid volt concursus*
Ad amnem, o Virgin?) from up on the Kansas Line
South to the Border, westward beyond the Divide
MORENO'S SHOES ARE HALF THE FUN OF HAVING
FEET
To where the hills are black above Hollywoodland
And old remorseful Ocean gives no sign

A NUESTROS CONSUMIDORES though the band
Yowl dead in a dead street.]

iii

Ay Amor tu cautiverio!

It was a big night
With her at the Green Mill: the usual precautions,
She was a good sport, a real pal, not what you're maybe
Thinking. And it wasn't the hang-over, or because she asked me
Will you respect me? Listen: it was the last week-end
Of a perfect summer. We'd been together every day
Up and down the coast from Diego to Carmel, swimming
Nights in the moon away from everyone (we were almost
Caught, once, up in Carmel): and friday
She drove down from L. A. and picked me up,
And it was for the last time.

We crossed over
And got a couple of pints — tequila — in Tijuana
(The only girl I ever knew who could put it down
Straight, no lemon afterwards: but I couldn't):
That road's sweet hell from the Line down,
Cañons, hairpin turns half a mile straight up from the
Sea, crazy drunk mountains —
But I caught up with her all right when we got to Ensenada
About sunset.

A good kid! You see, the day before
The Governor or somebody'd got sore
Because an american souse up in Caliente
Called him a son-of-a-bitch. The whole town
Was cockeyed, *cuicos* rushing around
Every which-way, cantinas jammed with pass-outs;
And she offered to run a foot-race with anyone:
'Give ear, O Mexico! Atalanta broadcasting:
'I'll race anybody, young, old, pregnant, moribund, or

'Proletarian, down the beach to the *castillo.*
'A modicum down, the balance in small amounts.
'And if you win, you can damn well be
'Governor, for all of me.
'And if I win, I'll never tell.'
Well, and this Gómez
From the corner where he'd been scribbling
Athánata over and over *Virgo ô athánata*
On the back of a menu
Looks up:
'Poor fool,
'You poor fool, it's too late now: almost night,
'The clock, and you
you were younger . . .'

Suddenly there was nothing I could see ahead for us.

Or, it may have been
Todos-Santos, so blue; or
The sawdust stink of puke that's Ensenada,
After
. . . almost, I think,
There was reason for letting us go blank,
After sunset, after the clang
Of singing last night in the bar downstairs,
Cielito lindo and *La Adelita se llama*
La joven,
and her voice suddenly alone
Ay Amor! tu cautiverio
and no sound till she whispered
Lástima ay! . . . de mi afán
Almost, or the long
Late wind from the Sierra, the flashing light from the Point
Tapping the wall just over our bed
HEMOS DEJADO

HEMOS DEJADO

. . . *ay Amor* . . .

HEMOS DEJADO

(*de mi afán*

iv

Also they do distil the strength of the plant magüey

[Therefore I name thee fortunate, J M Gómez,
Fortunate in a long life well acquitted,
Most fortunate in dying. Thee nor strangled court
Nor pavid Senate sickened. Our streets
Yet rang clean with Roman young laughter.
Decorous our maidens and honoured; not yet
Had they to pass our youths with eyes averted,
Heavy with shame.]

Whereof tequila a brandy surpassing strong

v

And next morning,
Sunning ourselves on the beach. I was thinking,
She on her belly reading to me from *Photoplay* about Joan
Crawford, how
Joan Crawford overcame
Each obstacle between herself & Fame, and
Was just a home-body.
And somewhere
Back up on the beach of the Conquistadores a Vic
Was moaning *How come you do me like you do-do-do?*
And there were little soldiers sunning themselves in the
Plaza,
And the sun clanged out of the noon Angelus, far away,
Somewhere, far away, over
Paris maybe, or Kansas, growing older, growing

Out of love.
There was no one.
Just then
She looked up at me: laughing: *Sid Grauman's back!*
Darling, you must always love me.
There's nothing ahead.

And afterwards cut my own throat. So came to this sunless place.

Ay Amor! tu cautiverio
ay misterio!
[*La antigua forma de nuestra botella.*
J. M. Gómez.]

vi

I will have a grocer, and he shall do admirable things.

What will you have him do?
Seven dollars,
Four days a month. A muff job, but that saves collars,
Anyhow.
Marry, I will have him —
This?
This? nothing: only
Henry's perhaps in a polo-coat on pay-nights; the rest,
What sayest thou, cony?

(Their eyes were lifted.
Their eyes are dead.
Stars drifted
Compassionless overhead.
They are gone from the sky.
The wind is long,
Good bye.)

Even tonight remembrance is uneasy.
Regret stirs even tonight for almost forgotten things.
It is easy to regret. *Let him kill a lion with a pestle!*
Beverly, Wilshire, Sunset, Hollywood: in every street
MORENO'S SHOES ARE HALF THE FUN OF HAVING FEET
The dead march lock-step, two by two.
He was a king; so were you,
Tonight no king. LET HIM KILL A LION WITH A PESTLE!

[. . . and the next week we heard them
Lon Chaney se ha muerto!
Crying it in the streets of Mexicali, calling
Across to each other from sidewalk tables *Cuál? Cuál?*
And the kid dropped out beers crash! in his tracks, and grabbed
The patrón's paper where he was reading it. Later
He went by our table snuffling: 'He was a good guy;
'Staked me a week up there, got me a job (seven
'Bucks a day)', he said; and,
'He was a good guy.'
But Mike the Silurist says
(Christ he's a hard one! can nothing get him?), 'Yeah,
'He was that. But where the hell's our beer?
(*cerveza!*)
'One for me, see? and one for me, and one
'For the sheriff's daughter; *y pronto* —']

. . . So many of our dear friends (she told me) have passed away
In airplane accidents, I simply wouldn't dare
Go up, not for anything. I told her she was right.

Juárez: 1930

DUDLEY FITTS

HOMECOMING

ALBERT drove me home from the station after dark. It was strange, coming back to the house in the dark, not being able to see it clearly, for at home there are no street lights; nor indeed any streets, only a dirt road in open country with no other houses for miles around. We drove into the side yard and then I could see a light in the kitchen, for the front of the house had been dark. I felt funny as we got out and went up the steps.

In the kitchen they were all waiting for me. My brothers had had their hair combed and were dressed as if they were going into town. They smiled shyly as I shook hands with them, and my sisters were affectionate but embarrassed. I stood there, smiling and not knowing what to say or do next.

"Where is Ma?" I said.

Nobody answered right away. Then they said, "On the front porch."

Albert and I went out. It was almost dark on the porch, but in the dim light I could see a huge form crouched on a bench like a sick animal and making strange sobbing noises.

Albert said something to her. She did not answer but crouched there like an animal and cried. Albert took her by the shoulder and shook her roughly. Then she sat up and held out her hand. We shook hands. "Hello," I said. She kept up her terrible sobbing.

"You come home," she said. "Yes, yes, you come home. What for? You no good. You no help. Why you no stay in Nowy York?"

Who is this woman, I cried in my heart, this strange woman that is crouched like an animal ready to spring at me? I reached for Albert in the dark and he pressed my hand.

"Why you come back?" she went on. "You no send me money. Look at me. I have ten children. Strong children. All but you. Work all time. Bring me money. All but you. Why you no stay in Nowy York?"

"Come on," said Albert. We went back into the house.

They were still sitting awkwardly about the kitchen, just as I had left them. But they were even more embarrassed than before, because they had heard Ma talking.

"Come on to bed," said Albert. I said good night to everybody and we went upstairs.

It seemed strange to be lying in bed once more in the plain little unpapered room. The silence of the country was so loud that I could not sleep. From time to time I could hear horses stamping in the stable and the barking of a dog. And I was conscious of my brothers, my sisters and my mother sleeping all around me. I couldn't keep quiet any longer.

"I can't stand it," I said. "I can't stand the way they look at me. And Ma. That was awful."

"Oni cie kochayo," Albert murmured. He was half asleep.

"I know they love me. But they despise me. I can see it in their eyes."

"Spi, Spi," he whispered.

So I turned toward the wall and closed my eyes, but I couldn't sleep.

The next day was Sunday. Albert got up at sunrise to do the chores, but he let me sleep. When he came back I got up and we both dressed for church.

It was a long time since I had seen the gaudy crowded little church. Some of the faces were familiar, but most of the younger ones I did not know. They all looked at me. I was glad that Ma was on the left side of the church with the women, for I had not been to confession and I could not receive. All of my brothers went up to the rail and I remained kneeling in the pew with my face in my hands.

After the Mass a great many people stopped to talk to us outside the church. Jan Sadlowski, who had gone to school with me, came over to us with a grin on his face.

"How's New York?" he asked.

"All right," I said, trying to grin back at him.

"I guess you think we're a lot of hicks up here, don't you?" he said.

"Hell, no," I said. I felt uncomfortable.

Finally we got into the car and drove to Uncle Guy's, all except Stachu and Wladek, who had to walk home to do the noonday chores.

Uncle Guy lived in one of a little group of low red brick houses, all built alike, along the river just beyond the paper mill. There were a dozen families living there. The rooms were very low and unpapered, but on every wall there was a bright-colored calendar or a religious chromo. There was a bed in every room, and a kerosene lamp, for the houses had neither electricity nor gas. When we arrived someone was playing an accordion and Uncle Guy was singing. He was already beginning to be drunk.

Everybody kissed me, and they all talked at once in very loud voices. Somebody brought me a glass of moonshine, which I drank. It was terrible. Then somebody else brought me a glass and I had to drink that, too. Then dinner was ready and we all went into the dining room and sat down.

They kept asking me how New York was getting along and how I liked living there. They were all beginning to be drunk, and I did not feel as uncomfortable as I had felt until then, because drunken people are nearly always nice and pleasant.

After dinner we went back into the front room and sat around wherever we could find a place; on the bed, on the chairs, on trunks, and some of the men leaned against the walls. They offered me a chair and I sat down. Then they brought in some more moonshine, with several bottles of beer and a big platter of dried cheese. The cheese tasted funny and crumbly in my mouth after not tasting it for so many years, but the beer was good. The moonshine was terrible, but they kept giving me glasses of it and looked hurt if I hesitated to take it, so I had to keep on drinking it. I felt funny, but I was no longer ill at ease. I began to love everybody and to think that after all they were my own people. I had come back to them with love in my heart, but I had found a barrier of distrust and hostility between us, for I had gone away from them and had not shared their life as all the rest of us had done. But that didn't seem to matter any longer.

Stanislas played the accordion and Albert sang "Żegnal góral swa góralkę" because he knew it was my favorite song. The room was hazy with smoke from the pipes and the cigarettes and the lamps, there were people standing and sitting everywhere, a great many of them had begun to sing, and through the smoke and the clamor I could hear the song that I loved. My head was going around and around; and I wanted to cry with tenderness and happiness. Finally they handed the accordion to me. I had not played one for years, but I had been drinking so much that I wasn't afraid to try, so I played for all I was worth and it all came back to me right away. They began to shout and to clap their hands, and Marianna and Joe Kelieć began to dance, stamping their feet and tossing their heads from side to side, and then Albert danced, too, and finally Ma got up and began to dance with

them. Everybody laughed, but they clapped their hands and shouted to her to keep it up, and she swirled around with a silly smile on her face until she sat down on the bed unexpectedly. I got up and went over to her.

"How's my best girl?" I shouted.

She grinned and patted my face. "You good boy," she said.

"How's my best girl?" I shouted again and I grabbed hold of her and pulled her to her feet and danced her around the room. Everybody yelled at the top of their voices. Ma and I danced around and around the room. They had started to play "Żegnal góral swa góralkę" again and we both sang as loud as we could. Everybody got up and danced except Uncle Guy, who was now playing the accordion and yelling his head off.

The next morning we were all out in the fields by sunrise. The eastern horizon was still a deep orange color and against it I saw the huge body of my mother walking slowly across the furrows. I felt then that I was seeing her for the first time. She was no longer a woman but a goddess risen from the ploughed field with the warm loam still clinging to her. She loomed enormously against the sky and her steps were slow and tremendous as she paced the field. I thought how I had been born from her in the way the crops are born from the rich soil and I felt that if I could put my head again between her great breasts I should become stronger than anybody or anything in the whole world. Away from her in every direction the field stretched in waves like an ocean. Beyond the fields were the mountains, bluish grey in the early morning haze. The sun had now fully risen.

I began to feel sick. My nerves were raw and shaky from the moonshine that I had drunk the night before, and there were terrible cramps in my stomach. I had done no hard work for a long time, and already my back was beginning to pain me from stooping over and kneeling down and getting up

again. My hands were beginning to blister and the sweat was pouring down my face. I kept on working, for my brothers were all around me in the field, hard at work and untired, and the enormous figure of my mother was looming at the other end of the furrows. Time after time I would think that I could work no longer, but finally it was time for breakfast and we all went in and sat down at the table.

I looked around at them. It was the first time that we had sat down together at our own table for many years. My sisters were going back and forth from the kitchen, waiting on the table, but my brothers were there beside me, glancing at me from time to time with shy, eager looks. My heart yearned over them, but there was no understanding in their eyes. Only Albert kept the talk going and saw that I got plenty to eat.

After breakfast we went back to the field. I felt better for a while, having had a big breakfast, but in an hour or so I began to feel worse than ever. I was really quite sick from the moonshine, and the work was too much for me. About ten o'clock Ma went into the house. All the boys looked at each other strangely, but no one said anything. I kept on working with the skin torn from my hands and sharp pains shooting up and down my back.

About eleven o'clock I gave up. "I don't feel well," I said. "I'm not used to that moonshine. I guess I'll go in the house for a while." I did not look at any of them as I spoke, but I could feel their eyes on me.

When Marianna called us to lunch I came downstairs. The boys were all sitting at the table. Just as I entered Ma came out of her room. I could smell moonshine. She came over to me.

"Lazy bugger," she said. "Loafer. Why you no stay in Nowy York? You no like work. You like drink all time. You no like work."

"Shut up, Ma," said Albert. "You're full of moonshine yourself."

"You shut up," she screamed at him and then turned on me again in a fury. "You no good. All time make pictures. No send me money. All time drink. Why you no go back to Nowy York? You no good. You no like my other sons. All time speak English. All time no go to confession. Go back to Nowy York."

"Oh, Ma," I said, "I can't help it. I'm not used to drinking that stuff."

"Shut up, you," she screamed. "You lazy bugger. You no be my son. Go back to Nowy York. You bastard," and she hit me in the face.

"You sow," I yelled at her. "You big sow."

Albert drove me back to the station that night. We were silent all the way. When we were standing on the platform I said, "Come with me."

"I can't," he said.

"Are you going to stay here always?"

"I've got to. If I went away it would be worse for the kids. I've got to stay."

"You make me feel like a skunk."

"It's different with you. You can paint. I can't do anything except farm. I belong here. I've got to stay."

"But I can't ever come home again after this," I said. The train was drawing into the station and I wanted to die. "You've got to come and see me sometimes." I stood on the steps of the train and we shook hands.

"Don't worry," he said. "I'll come and see you sometimes."

LINDLEY WILLIAMS HUBBELL

ARCHITECTURE CHRONICLE

THE BROWN DECADES AND THE BROWN YEAR

THE history of architecture may be made more actual than the most of the new buildings which rise around us. Lewis Mumford's account of American architecture between 1865 and 1895 in *The Brown Decades** makes one prouder of our achievements than do all the skyscrapers, the schools, and the suburban houses which were built in such numbers during the decade just past which followed on the War. Those years of lavish expenditure on building have now come to an end, those years when "taste and refinement" reigned unchallenged in domestic architecture, and *Verticalismus*, as the Germans called it, in commercial building. Only the factories which were not intended to be architecture, and the palaces of the motion picture which no one of culture accepted as architecture interrupted the boring mediocrity of eclecticism resurgent.

Mr. Mumford, returning to the period which followed the Civil War, brings to our notice that in that earlier post-war day there existed one architect able to dominate the chaos of the spendthrifts. Richardson is mentioned in every history of American architecture. This is perhaps the first time since Mrs. Van Rensselaer's book on his work appeared in 1888, two years after his death, that he receives something like his due. What is needed, of course, is another

*Reviewed by John Wheelwright on page 328.

well illustrated book on Richardson, as Mr. Mumford points out. But as a general critical estimate his own account serves admirably.

Who can say how many volumes have been devoted to the American architecture of the eighteenth century in the years since Richardson's death, encouraging the revival which brought his influence in domestic architecture to an end? Yet in the architecture of the eighteenth century, which is the particular pride of Nationalist critics, how few seeds of national originality appear. Even Jefferson is certainly of less significance than Richardson to the general history of architecture in the estimation of European critics and historians.

Mumford treats the work of Root more briefly than that of Richardson. He brings out how different might have been the effect of the World's Fair of 1893 had he lived, and also the relative superiority of the first skyscrapers built by contemporaries of Root who had no pretensions as designers. In the case of Sullivan the emphasis is shifted from his ornament, to which he turned in Mumford's image as to an intoxicant, toward his more significant accomplishments in theory and in practice. The American Institute of Architects, for reasons which remain mysterious, published Sullivan's *Autobiography of an Idea*. Neither they nor any one else in the period after the War, when Sullivan's authority was so freely quoted for the vertical treatment of skyscrapers, thought to publish his most logical tall building, now part of the Carson Pirie and Scott Store in Chicago. In this the expression of the steel-cage construction was frankly horizontal and the windows filled the entire width of the bays. Had *The Brown Decades* no other claims to distinction beside the illustration of that building and of one or two others equally surprising and equally unknown, it would already be an important contribution to the history of American architecture.

The Pray Building in Boston, as Mumford points out, shows that Richardson even before the change from masonry to steel construction in commercial building had recognized the need of wide bays and avoidance of window reveals in such work. The two examples of the work of McKim Mead and White, in particular the Baltimore church which suggests the contemporary work of Theodor Fischer and Karl Moser in Germany and Switzerland, prove that the very firm which led in the so-called American Renaissance after the Classical Revolution of the Chicago World's Fair of 1893, were

capable of having continued the true line of modern architecture which began with Richardson.

It is significant that these buildings found no place in the official monographs in which the achievements of our Medicean age were proudly presented as America's chief contribution to the architecture of the world. In Europe from the first there were some to accept this claim as the sincerest flattery. To-day there are many more who believe that America leads the world in architecture. The reasons they give are seldom — except in England — her command of the Classical vocabulary. Indeed that command, both in itself and in its ability to impress, has been weakening almost since the American Renaissance first began. The European critics grant American architecture preëminence to-day for its technical and not for its aesthetic achievements. Yet if we consider the technics of architecture to include sociological elements, city planning, housing at minimal cost and the like, it is clear that we cannot justly accept the compliment.

But in the eighties American architecture did lead the world both aesthetically and technically. Nor were we without a surprisingly discriminating consciousness of the fact. In Montgomery Schuyler America had an architectural critic of distinction to whom the pages of the leading professional journals were regularly open. He expounded a doctrine leading inevitably, it would appear in retrospect, to that upon which the leading modern architects of Europe now base their work. Yet even he succumbed in his later life to the appeal of America's later and cheaper achievements. He lived to praise the Woolworth Building, that landmark with which the worst phase of skyscraper design began.

After 1893 Sullivan went more and more into retirement. Wright, his distinguished disciple, developed as a professional rebel. The rising tide of "taste and refinement" swamped all the low buildings in the land until the very White House was made Early American and a replica of Mount Vernon sent to Paris to vie with the temple of Angkor. The skyscrapers raised their cornices and parapets, their gargoyles and salamanders, in Alpine parody above the general mediocrity until the very fairy-tale illustrations of Maxfield Parrish came monstrously to life on Lexington Avenue. The leading architects were high priests of culture who patronizingly aided the growth of the "Allied Arts," as painting and sculpture were known.

Richardson was no rebel. He had been accepted in his day as the

leading architect of America. Adams's were his clients as well as Ames's and the railroads called on him to design their stations. For American railroad stations, curiously enough, were modern before they became Roman baths. The firm of Burnham and Root developed the first architectural office cast in the mould of big business. After Root's death, however, Burnham's organizing ability went to the service of the new Classical gods his gifted partner had not known. The first phase of modern architecture in America was short. The death of Richardson in 1886 followed by Root's death six years later brought a sad change.

In political terms the Liberals, — then Sullivan and Wright, — were forced out of power. In spite of the fact that the Institute published Sullivan's book and that Wright in time was called to give a course at a leading university (whose buildings remain Gothic), the Liberals have remained in Opposition ever since.

It is not necessary to describe the production of the last forty years while the Conservatives controlled American architecture — it is visible from any window — or to point out again of what feats Wright was capable even in his isolation. But this Fall it is possible to believe that the long reign of the Conservatives is coming to an end. After a generation, it is not the same Liberals who are coming to the fore. Sullivan is dead and Wright has been too long a rebel to change his ways. Those who build our most advanced buildings are now for the most part European trained if not European born. They owe to their European training, as Richardson and Sullivan never did, both the originality and the aesthetic discipline of their best work. Americans were precursors in developing a modern style. But that style took form in Europe while we returned to Revivalism. There is nothing for us now to do, if we would go on, but to accept and transplant the international modern style as we did in the eighteenth century, grateful that Hobans, Mangins, and Latrobes are still ready to come to our shores.

This Fall, when construction is nearly at a standstill, there is, nevertheless, a group of new buildings in America which represent a wide practise of the fully developed modern style of architecture. They are culturally, if not statistically, significant. In Wisconsin, Hamilton Beatty, a pupil of Le Corbusier, has built two houses. Stonorow, a pupil of Lurçat and one of the authors of a monograph on Le Corbusier, has designed a laboratory which has been erected at Highlands, N. C. Clauss and Daub have set up in Cleve-

land the first of a series of standardized filling stations for the Standard Oil Company of Ohio. Nearer New York, Howe and Lescaze have completed the Hessian Hills School at Croton, and are finishing a skyscraper for the Philadelphia Savings Fund Society in Philadelphia. The aluminum house exhibited by Kocher and Frey at the Architectural League Show last spring has been set up permanently near Syosset on Long Island.

In New York itself there are as yet few buildings in which compromise with the taste of the past decade are not still evident. But in the field of engineers' architecture the Starrett-Lehigh Building at Eleventh Avenue and Twenty-Sixth Street is radical and striking even if certain attempts at decorative embellishment are contradictory and retardataire. The new building by Thompson and Churchill on the northwest corner of Lexington Avenue and Fifty-Seventh Street introduces important innovations in structure. The expanses of glass, indeed, are probably excessive in such a building. It is marred by uncertainty in detail, particularly in the use of color. Hood's McGraw-Hill Building on West Forty-Second Street is excellent in color and general conception. Only the set-backs, which are, of course, required by the zoning laws on so large a building, and the heavy crowning motif still recall the conventional skyscraper of the past decade. It is as great an advance as could be expected in American commercial architecture. Yet Howe and Lescaze's skyscraper will go further in the achievement of positive style.

Hood's General Electric refrigerator shop in Flushing represents in a different field as great an advance as the McGraw-Hill Building, particularly if one remembers the New York shoe-stores of a few years ago. The "monitor top" is to be regretted as an unarchitectural concession to publicity; the reveals of the great windows are so deep that the corner piers are still somewhat buttress-like; but on the whole this Flushing store is a very creditable piece of commercial architecture.

All these buildings were built during what might be called the "Brown Year" when the economists tell us construction practically ceased. The list might have been further extended by including the work of Muschenheim and of Lyman Paine in building modern summer cottages in wood or by mentioning other examples of modern architecture built previous to the last twelve months. These latter, it is encouraging to remark, are for the most part less good, or even as in the case of the new School for Social Research,

THE STANDARD OIL CO
ATLAS TIRES
ATLAS TIRES

HOUSE OF STEEL AND ALUMINUM
SYOSSET, LONG ISLAND

A. LAWRENCE KOCHER
ALBERT FREY

BUILDING FOR REX COLE, INC.
FLUSHING, LONG ISLAND

RAYMOND HOOD

mere superficial imitations of modern architecture. In a complete accounting there would also be some remodelled houses and many modern interiors to discuss, from Howe and Lescaze's Trans-Lux theatres to an apartment by Miës van der Rohe.

I venture to state that in no other year since the War has so much building of significance for the development of modern architecture been done in America. Such a statement has no very exact meaning, but it emphasizes that modern architecture has become again, after a generation, of general consequence in America. In quantity we have less than Germany or Czechoslovakia and in quality less than Holland and France. But in both respects we have far more than Italy or England and as much as Belgium or Sweden.

Yet we have to-day no architect who promises to achieve the individual greatness of Richardson in the "Brown Decades," or of Wright in the intervening period. The buildings mentioned in the vicinity of New York could all be seen in a single day. Far more fine architecture dating from the last decades of the nineteenth century and the beginning of our own could still be studied in a day in Chicago. The earlier phase of modern architecture of which Mumford gives the history so effectively and comprehensively in *The Brown Decades* remains of extraordinary importance. But the "Brown Year" through which we have just passed produced as much advanced work as the entire intervening period outside that of Wright.

HENRY-RUSSELL HITCHCOCK, JR.

THEATRE CHRONICLE

HAMLET, MOURNING BECOMES ELECTRA

I

IN THE theatre in which one could have, for a few weeks, enjoyed Mr. Norman Bel Geddes ideas of *Hamlet*, a man sold paper-bound copies of reprints of a victorian edition of the worst eighteenth century version of the play. He hawked them by crying, "Get a libretto, follow the action of the play." To have bought one would have been to incur an unnecessary expense, for Mr. Bel Geddes showed us the worst of a series of 20th-Century cuttings.

One imagines this producer considering who else had recently done *Hamlet*. There was, to be sure, John Barrymore, Walter Hampden, Basil Sydney, even Fritz Lieber. He considered the continuity, the accretion of a tradition of some understanding and reinterpretation of the play. He decided he could concoct a new medley, not necessarily fresh or illuminating in its attitude, but at least it would be different from any *Hamlet* ever seen, and it would go big because people needed a jolt, — because Shakespeare needed a jolt.

Mr. Bel Geddes did Shakespeare a certain favor. Under the welter of inconsistencies, in the abysm of his unfailing evil taste, the play remained unquenchably and indestructibly absorbing — although it presupposed, as here presented, a thorough knowledge of the folios before one entered the theatre.

Mr. Bel Geddes' prime innovations included a flesh and blood ghost dressed in the most tangible of armor, with his son speaking,

by some random hint from Freud, his father's lines. One recalls the beautiful shaft of steel light Robert Edmond Jones conceived for Barrymore's ghost. Ophelia snickers behind Polonius' banalities, which hardly foreshadows her mad grief at his murder. The soliloquy is spoken in the shadows, which could have been an effective innovation had not Mr. Raymond Massey been so continuously embarrassed by the naïveté of Shakespeare's use of blank verse. The King snapped at white-of-egg kisses, one assumes to guage his worry, in his audience with Rosencrantz and Guildenstein and dallied with a lady courtier in the play scene to evince his, What? Osric, the magnificent Waterfly, was portmanteaued into part of Laertes, and, worst of all, Hamlet was never sent to England, never suddenly returned, and hence had no reason to know Ophelia was not dead. Like a double exposure one felt the continual flow of Shakespeare's multiple intention, superimposed on the accidental stage grouping of Bel Geddes' caprice.

Some years ago Mr. Bel Geddes created for Morris Gest and Reinhardt a gilded horror called *The Miracle*. Its main claim to fame was the reconstruction of the Century Theatre into a dubious Ziegfield St. John the Divine and the use of a number of scenes using something like 600 puppets, or 100 people disguised as the Communion Service which were scrapped at the dress rehearsal. The grandeur of this Behemoth still clouds Mr. Bel Geddes vision. He couldn't resist a little extraneous pageantry with Ophelia's funeral procession. The Gothic nuns carried electric candles, behind each of which was a chromium plated Xmas-card star. The mob scenes had the plastic quality of Middle-European post-war howls first exploited in *The Miracle*. Red shadows on the back-drop and no connection with the dramatic fluidity of *Hamlet*. The costumes were a synthesis of Saxon England and Italian Renaissance, the scenery was of the Chrysler Building modernistic, with Kleig lights in brilliant "simple elementary" soups of color. Such a monument of vulgarity and lazy impulses surely must mark the lowest point to which a private notion can be publicly manifest.

One hopes increasingly for the *Hamlet* that will mean "Hamlet" to our generation as Booth or Salvini, Forbes-Robertson or John Barrymore did to theirs. Conceive of Leslie Howard as Hamlet with his grave mask and bearing; his exquisite comprehension of diction and his intelligence to accept the humility of tragedy in its profoundest dictates. Hamlet is a cousin of Hotspur, Mercutio and Lear's fool. The play is a duel of appearances. Hamlet is the most

desperate of the riskers, since he has more to lose. Let him once be played as a high-spirited young prince with the elegance of scrawniness, pricking reality at his rapier's end, countering with greater or lesser delicacy the demons of disaster, playing at terrific odds with no outward wince of self-betrayal, and let Fortinbras again have the ordnance fired and carry him off, snapped in two, like a split blade, undone not by a tradition of rhetorical obeyance or disobeyance but by Hubris and the commands of life.

II

Perhaps the one single generalization that is at the root of what is most wrong, most poverty-stricken in our theatre is the total bankruptcy of realism. It is increasingly difficult to distinguish audience from actors. People go to the theatre as to a mirror, gratefully greet their images and yet when they leave cannot recall the source of pleasure until, at home, they repeat again the mirrored patterns. The plays of Philip Barry, the European comedies produced by Gilbert Miller, such actresses as Hope Williams combine to corroborate a class of society that can use such entertainment as a vanity case in which to watch themselves, with the added titillation of conventionally unconventional behavior that has taken on from its slickness, some prestige value. The fast paced shows satirizing Hollywood such as *Louder Please* and *Wonder Boy* do a similar job for a different class. At least here one gets the release of two or three belly-laughs, a memorable joke or a swift situation. So that one cannot be too ungrateful in detailing the disappointments of Eugene O'Neill's latest masterpiece. Here at least one has more than corroboration, and because O'Neill can afford to give us in addition to corroboration an approach to a ritualized lyricism, an explanation of a chronicle of national doom, we are made so much more gloomy by his evasion and failure.

For not by the widest stretch of a considered imagination can *Mourning Becomes Electra* be described as a great play.

Though Mr. O'Neill's trilogy follows somewhat the plot of the Oresteia he has written a formless play; a play unpardonably long. He thinks to gain by temporal extension in the theatre the actual chronology of youth into age. He merely tires his actors and his audience. Each separate play, *Homecoming*, *The Hunted*, and *The Haunted* could be reduced to one or two, at the least, carefully constructed scenes. O'Neill prefers completeness, which when examined closely resolves into a kind of laziness. It is easier to write

more than less. Many scenes of decorative local color could have been omitted in the constant repetition of their monotonous diction, and compacted into an accurate rhetoric for which blank verse has always been such a flexible means. One by no means advises O'Neill to rewrite his play in blank verse — but there are far too many speeches, such as his symbolic references of the South Seas, the free isles. Here it requires the most concentrated energy to be precise and lean. One would hate to lose that most beautiful setting of a ship, one of Mr. Jones' greatest achievements and the finest of sea songs, "Shenandoah," however badly sung as here directed, but one is forced to admit, as a case in point, that the whole adventure of Christine warning Brant would have been far more effective if the actual death had not been realized in front of the audience, and O'Neill had only left his last act of *The Haunted* where Orestes and Electra return and Clytemnestra senses the tragedy. Then would the audience have shared her insecurity. Had they killed him? What had they done? However, here the audience knew they had killed him and, what is more, they knew just how she would take it.

Mourning Becomes Electra could have perhaps been a great play in spite of its formlessness, in spite of its undistinguished diction, even in spite of its preponderant length. But unfortunately, and in the last analyses the elevation of the emotions of O'Neill's New Englanders are inconsiderable, comparing them with Greeks or Elizabethans. The Mannons are a nagging, petulant lot, whose most consistent feeling is jealousy and whose most attractive activity is hysteria. There is no tragedy, no loss in their successive horrors. One feels them better dead. Surely they themselves wish to be dead. They are in love with death, perhaps because, as Orin says of his father, they have never come to life. In a consistent tragedy the fate of the protagonists must be greater than the inexorable bitterness in themselves. Here Orin is better dead. Lavinia immuring herself is the apotheosis of self-love. Both in their implicit psychopathy lack implication or reference. When there is no choice, no illusion of free will, one is robbed of the greatest excitement of fate. O'Neill, burdened with an affected psychological logic, presupposes a pattern of development which is guessable and, when guessed, flat.

For the play lacks any real motivation. Here we are neither mortal puppets nor heroes. We are trapped in an ingenious web of a twentieth-century "psychological" pattern which has become more

intensely literary than the tradition of the Cloak and Sword. Search here and one finds, as prime mover only, the biological vagaries of a woman, perhaps only half articulated in the author's mind, a woman whose literary pattern is repititious to the point of negation. She becomes interested, excited, hysterical, — then a break and, with Nazimova's exquisite tenderness, she will say, "O Orin (Christine, Adam, Ezra), I'm sorry. I must have been excited." As O'Neill's underlying pattern is not vital but literary, so are his devices not theatrically helpful but merely fill the conventional demands, of what people traditionally expect to see as the decorations of tragedy. His unnecessary Shantey Man is a First Gravedigger or a Watchman or a minor Fool. His group of New England rustics which "set the background" for the Mannon glory and recur to tell of its decline and haunting, are concessions to a real inertia rather than considerations of what the play really requires. The trilogy's plan is eventually centrifugal. It turns in on itself. It may possibly be good theatre. It is certainly not a play one could see twice.

But where else in New York can one find as moving a five hours of absorbing interest? With its sensitive production and fine spare staging, in spite of the very slow pacing of its actions, it is surely a low high-water mark. Here is more than corroboration. Here is creation; in a way, amplification. Only when one is given so much one wants so much more. One wants a realized work, inevitable and heroic.

It is too early to speak of the activities of The Group Theatre, an offshoot of the Theatre Guild; a band of devoted young actors who hope to revive some of the spirit of the Russian Art Theatre. The Theatre Guild itself pursues its economic policy of wasting the talents of Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne on an evening of champagne cider. One would like to see them once far from the echoes of their domestic charms, as Bosola and the Duchess of Malfi, for example. Please, Mr. Producer, give us excitement, romantic excitement, heroes and heroines. We don't want to see ourselves any longer. Give us Katherine Cornell as L'Aiglon, Pauline Lord as Cressida, and Clifton Webb as the fool in Lear. Blanche Yurka does come with her Medea. Now we really only have Ed Wynn and Fred Astaire . . . and the Palace and Cole Porter's new show. One feels embarrassed, almost as if asking for a loan — in hoping for anything remotely connected with what used to be known as the "stage."

LINCOLN KIRSTEIN

OBITUARY: JEWISH ART THEATRE

IT MAY have been a case of psychic pregnancy, but anyway after the blood and thunder of the World War the Jews grew big with expectancy. The dream of the homeland in Zion was to be realized. Repercussions of the intense excitement moved many of the younger generation to our marrows here in New York. The Yiddish press, literature, and stage passed through a second flowering. Many of us sandpapered our Yiddish, read the *Tog* or *Vorwärts*, and grew excited over Maurice Schwarz's acting. The *Menorah Journal* and the Menorah Society became the chief turnbuckles holding and regulating us in the machine of an apparently more purposeful existence. We cheered the arrival of the fiery nationalist, Jabotinsky, and went delirious over him in the talk he gave before the student body of City College — the Cheder on the Hill. There were soirees at which we read Sholem Aleichem in Yiddish and declaimed Bialik's poetry in Hebrew. We were nailing the mazuzu in earnest on the door of the new world.

That was ten years ago. All seems clinkers now, with a few of that bewildered generation still poking in the ash. A number have gone to Palestine; some have marched far to the Left, leaving their fathers' beards, their mothers' breasts; the rest have lost whatever idealism they had — a pathological flabbiness in its place pointing nowhere after the prolonged aching priapism. The bright irritating young men of the Menorah have been swept out with an iron broom. We are goyim, and we dislike Maurice Schwarz and his bottled Yiddish art.

To understand the pathetic case of Mr. Schwarz it is best to examine his background first. Russian born, he came to America at the age of eleven. At fifteen he was engaged by a Yiddish stock company in Baltimore. He played in repertory companies until 1912 when he joined David Kessler. In 1919 he took over with Max Wilner the Irving Place Theatre and organized the Yiddish Art

Theatre. Since then his company has appeared in the Nora Bayes Theatre, his own on Second Avenue, one of Proctor's old vaudeville houses, and elsewhere in town. This season Mr. Schwarz has shed his original company and is fluttering in English on Broadway.

The last decade has seen a steady retreat from the artistic program trumpeted far and wide by Mr. Schwarz in his palmy days. The chief causes for this retreat may be classified under three distinct heads: economics, the decline in the popularity of Yiddish, and Mr. Schwarz himself.

It is a commonplace to observe that the theatre has been having tremendous difficulties of late years. Slowly at first, rapidly after the coming of the popular talkies, the movies have been hogging the limelight. Talent flocks to Hollywood. Producers are willing to take fewer and fewer chances. And now, when even movie magnates are beginning to complain about business, it has become a sorry state of affairs for stage hands, actors, and directors. All this applies with triple force to the position of the Yiddish stage.

The Yiddish stage and press could bank year after year on the steady flow into this country of immigrants. The bulk of our fathers and mothers are East European Jews — Russian, Polish, Austrian, Hungarian, Roumanian. These groups are Yiddish speaking. As time goes on, however, fewer Jews are leaving Soviet Russia; they are gradually becoming tolerant of a society dangerous to religion and the petty bourgeois; if not, they go to Palestine. The quota law has been an effective stopcock against the other Jewish immigrants. Moreover, Zionism has revived an interest in Hebrew. The dry stiff Talmudic-Biblical language has bloomed into a lusty girl familiar with street and marketplace. Yiddishists and Hebraists have tweaked each other's noses; heads have been broken. Yiddish is, after all, many odds and ends picked up, a crazyquilt, a jargon; it has, despite its shortcomings, richly served its masters, and is still vastly alive. It is obvious that at present the old Yiddish-speaking generation, dying away here, can draw few reinforcements for the life and death struggle. Circulation of Yiddish papers has fallen. Theatres are being shut. Actors are starving. And Mr. Schwarz is mouthing English under "the aegis of the Messrs. Shubert."

The fate of other foreign language theatres in the United States must, it appears, overtake the Yiddish theatre also. The German theatre was dead before our war hysteria raised its hobnailed boots to crush interest in the tongue, music, and literature of the enemy. The Chinese theatre died last year; burnt out in Chatham Square, it

found little patronage in Grant Street. On his last return the great Italian Grasso found audiences of thirty and forty to welcome him; the Orlando Furioso puppets in Mulberry Street are drawing a smaller and smaller public. That the Yiddish theatre has outlasted all of these is a tribute to Yiddish tenacity, power, and influence in this country.

Coming to the third point in this consideration of Mr. Schwarz's case, we may be able to find some mitigating circumstances. Actors? Mr. Schwarz certainly had a group of competent actors. We can recall offhand Lazar Freed, Bina Abramovitz, and Charles Goldenberg. Did he find it hard to get good plays? Yet he had writers like Sholem Aleichem, Peretz, Ash, Ansky, Hirshbein, and dozens of others to bank on.

The Jewish theatre on the East Side has such great figures as Adler and Mogulescu in its tradition. It could have well afforded to smile at the gawkiness and incoherence of the American theatre's first struggles with honest native realism. In the creation of type characters it was insuperable. True it brewed lots of charlatanism, stale molasses, vulgarity. But it had a Dickensian vigor, a strong working of sour bread in a deep kneading trough. From its people it drew a wealth of material: oriental color, mysticism, and depth; a lean shrewdness come of centuries of being pressed by the world to the wall; the spigot of the eyes always moist; an overabundance of emotion in happiness, poverty, and oppression; subtle imitativeness as of precocious children; dear ritual and religious ecstasy; moving folklore; the home a hushed temple, and yet within vivid flashes of the Dutch genre pictures done with broad good humor; and last a strong stomach for all the world's goods. A people who have had so much of the dramatic and theatrical in their history that they find themselves at ease on any stage. In this respect they seem to have the wild exuberance of our better burlesquers, hoofers, black and white songsters, — pretty whores with little art but with a free spending of themselves.

Mr. Schwarz, shrewd enough to realize all this, tried to play each of the various stops on the Jewish flute. He went in for trifles done ineptly, the "Shakespear & Co." sort of play during the old days in the Nora Bayes Theatre. During his unsuccessful stay in his own Second Avenue Theatre and his camping elsewhere about town, he flung about a new philosophy of art and a new bag of ballocksed tricks. He staged spectacles like "Kiddush Hashem", crowding the boards with tawdry scenery, with overstuffed tangled marionettes,

with appeals to every one of the senses. He experimented with the newest devices — revolving stages that turned about like ancient hurdy-gurdies. He went further and added a few pretty virgins to his company to take the place of some of the old horn-hipped hacks; then sugared his plays with more love and romance. In "Jew Suss" we find him bogged deep in historical treacle and onion tears. Sensationalism and downright vulgarity followed as in "Uncle Moses". The Uncle shows off the rich apartment to the daughter of the lantsman who, though she loathes the suits manufacturer, has become betrothed to him for the sake of her poor parents. We get the scene in the pokey bedroom, the red light symbolical, Moses sweetishly seductive, the whole timing prolonged torturously when the episode had no purpose in itself. Here the whole preparation delayed as if to bring us all to the climax at the same stroke. The atmosphere as of a stag party with the horn soon to be brought into play. The curtain drops. We shudder, seeing, as if after staring unblinkingly at a "mystic photo", painted on the proscenium, on the walls, on the faces of the audience, the poor lamb being tupped. Even with this, fewer coppers rang in the register. So Mr. Schwarz forced down our throats wrenched cheapish humor. An instance: the scene in "Stempanyoo" where the two sons of the rich Jew, the poretz, quarrel and spit into one another's faces and into the faces of the other characters in the room. Looking back at that scene, we see clearly now how the knife was ground, the action whittled down, all for the uproar, the drowning out of the puling voice of an immature play.

Were Mr. Schwarz a better actor than he is a director and producer, perhaps his plays would not be such certain failures. His attempts at horseplay, at kicking up the dust have gotten him harnessed to mannerisms that have become second nature with him. He is fond of the business of the fat thumb, to use a Yiddish term. The action is blocked to give him a chance to cock his thumb as though he were studying a page of Talmud; also to show his ability to jump in and out of his part like a jack. He rarely drops the bad habit of repeating ad nauseam what he considers funny and smart. He likes to hug the footlights as if to get the splatter of the stale eggs on his own brave bosom. The true test of an actor is his ability to make a character grow on his audience. Mr. Schwarz can not develop a character. He had an excellent opportunity in "Uncle Moses" and failed miserably: all the rich change he suffered as the suits manufacturer consisted merely of his taking off some of his

false paunch, the adding of make-up, the putting of a more pronounced hook to his nose. Instead, Mr. Schwarz substitutes overemphasis, hammering so savagely at you that the character becomes blurred. We see Mr. Schwarz and dozens of his other portrayals, not that particular rôle; stuffed derma for overcrowded guts.

To clinch the argument against Mr. Schwarz & Co., it is interesting to contrast the Habima Players here a few seasons ago. Though decidedly nationalistic, the Hebrew group was neither meretricious nor chauvinistic. They could never have leaned on the crutch of "Yiddishkeit", on the attitude — "Well, being Jews, we are somehow different."

Confronted by Habima, Mr. Schwarz became openly imitative. Following their "Dybbuk", one of his productions included a dance scene in a kretchma which was not one bit so effective as the famous Habima beggars' dance. Also the acting of some of his company became highly stylized. Yet Mr. Schwarz missed the finer aspects of Habima genius — the Gothic structure of their acting; figures in their places finished corbels; the fine humor as in an early scene in "The Golem" where the cantor tries his voice like a cockerel; the richness as though everything had been strained through a silk cloth, that, for the impurities it had kept out, added color run from itself; mouths and eyes of wrestling Jacobs as though gored by God's offox. Even when they had their financial and managerial difficulties, this group of players did not allow their giant purpose to topple and fiddle dust. And at the dinner Mr. Schwarz gave in their honor, one of them, perhaps drunk, perhaps lucidly sober, called the Yiddish Art Company a bunch of hams and shysters.

Have we omitted a fourth reason for Mr. Schwarz's failure? After one of his "shows" we went into a restaurant near his theatre. In the men's room two Yiddish critics gabbing. "No, I didn't like Schwarz's Stempanyoo, but tell me how can one tell the truth just like that in the paper? It is like sticking a knife into a man's heart." Doesn't this also help explain such Jewishness, such art? If a knife has to be stuck into a man's heart, let us clutch with both hands and stab.

Moe Bragin

ART CHRONICLE

IN HOPES

ON THE opening day of the Whitney Museum of American Art, Mrs. Whitney, speaking over the radio, said: "I am making this collection the nucleus of a Museum devoted exclusively to American Art — a Museum which will grow and increase in importance as we ourselves grow."

The inauguration of the Whitney Museum is the most important thing that has happened to American art since the foundation of our now useless academies. The Whitney Museum may perhaps do more than any other single thing to bring American art back into a serious consideration it has not enjoyed since the days of Homer and Eakins. Its opening showed us for the first time a general cross section, with no bias toward any one gallery or group or academy, of New York art, which comes near to meaning American art, since most of the best artists exhibit in New York. There were, of course, omissions, but the present collection is, as Mrs. Whitney said, a nucleus. These hundreds of paintings, all perfectly hung, looked astonishingly handsome on the spacious clean walls. There was not one frame in bad taste. (Can this be said of any other museum in the world?) The works selected from each artist were usually representative ones, though here and there the artist did not seem to have been consulted. The level of craftsmanship was higher than most of us had expected, though no work showed that last desperate twist that makes a masterpiece.

The general impression was surprisingly un-French. These Americans did not look nearly so French as the Germans did last year at the Museum of Modern Art. But while more Americans than Germans have reacted into a violent nationalism, the Americans have no great tradition to fall back on, as the Germans have in the Cranachs and in Gothic sculpture. It is a good thing for American artists to stop imitating modern Frenchmen, but it would be a pity if they junked everything foreign and stopped studying the old masters from whom the modern Frenchmen learned their brilliance.

I fail to see why it should be more virtuous to paint as an American than as a Frenchman. A man should by all means paint what lies to hand about him, but should paint it as a member of an ageless family of artists, not as a hundred per cent American or Frenchman. An American must as surely die off when he begins to paint as an American, as Corot died off when he (like his fakers) began to paint "Corots." Nationality, like individuality, must be cast away to be found. It is not Walt Whitman who has turned out to be American, but Henry James. The question is not: "How must I, as an American, paint this?" but: "*How must this be painted?*"

In one of the upper galleries a long table was spread with over a dozen solid monographs that the Whitney Museum has brought out on various American painters. The two dollars for which they are sold cannot possibly cover what such handsome bookmaking and clear illustration must cost the Museum. They are exactly what is needed by public libraries and great collectors, but I could not help wishing there were something for me, who am neither a great collector nor a public library. There are not many American painters for whom I would give two dollars *and* shelf space, but I would welcome (and what's more, buy) a whole series of little chap books at a quarter each, each containing about a dozen little pictures, the essential biographical dates, and a credo, letter, poem or whatever by the artist himself (but *not* an "appreciation" by a friendly critic). Artists are not so dumb as they look. Some can write most excellent sense (Delacroix is an example), and even where they can't, their babblings make a document, as no outsider's observations can. What so-and-so thinks about Kuniyoshi is nothing to me, but I would give a lot to know what Kuniyoshi himself thinks about painting.

If any institution can help American artists, the Whitney Museum is that institution. It can help because it is not yet an institution, but two women of remarkable flair and energy. When they choose

artists to exhibit, they will not consider what will sell, as dealers must; and the best things are often slow to sell. It would be pleasant to hope that the Museum could help the public too, that the shows it is going to send travelling about the country would educate a few people to make up their own minds in self-reliance about American art. But people notoriously go to any lengths to get rid of thinking for themselves. They will merely turn to the Whitney Museum for sanction instead of to the dealers or the magazines, as they do now. The Whitney Museum is bound (perhaps doomed) to have a resounding suburban success like the Theatre Guild or the Book of the Month Club. Even granted the best will in the world, still "the hungry sheep look up and are not fed."

The reasons that limit the effectiveness of the Whitney Museum lie far outside its reach. It would seem as though we were returning to one of those periods when the artist (unless he has a private fortune) can work only to order, can do nothing but portraits ordered by private persons, or decorations ordered for buildings, when the artist can no longer create what he will on the chance of selling it to the next comer, when his studio must once again be like a tailor's shop, where each customer has his requirements fitted to order. For the past couple of generations the artist's studio has been like a gift shop, where you come in and select from a variety of ready-made objects. This was so in Holland, to some extent in the Seicento, and in Alexandria — in all periods where the arts find a public that is informed, eager and acquisitive. But can we be such a public? How can we be informed and yet swallow the "critical" blather of the Sunday supplements? Can we be eager when Art summons us Americans like Duty, "stern daughter of the voice of God?" Can we even be acquisitive when we shift about in cubby-hole apartments, each child throwing out his father's treasures and knowing that his children will do the same for his? And how can we buy pictures and yet keep our walls surgically blank, as the sterilized fashion exacts? Those who are not rich and like good paintings find that even mediocre originals are very expensive, whereas many great masterpieces can be had for very little in almost perfect German color reproductions. And those who can afford to be ashamed of living among reproductions go to trusted dealers and invest in authorized masterpieces by the illustrious dead. This country of "enterprize" has not one Maecenas with the culture, and therefore the courage, to support an artist by buying all his works, the way Charles V and Philip II supported Titian. Where

in all this is there a chance for the artist who has the misfortune to be unknown and alive? If he has private means he can work in solitude (as Cézanne and Degas did) and hope that posterity may swing around to him. But what if he is stranded without money in this land where there are none of those sinecures that made art, scholarship and writing possible for so many great men in Europe and in ancient Rome?

The Whitney Museum will help in two ways. Since it is only a growing "nucleus" of what will be, it will help support certain artists by buying their works (the only real help there is), and it will eventally provide a clearing house where any man wishing to order a work of art can pick over samples of everybody's output. It may also help artists by showing them each other's work and so making them aware of some common movement. This might poke them on to a healthy rivalry, and so raise the general standard. But in the end, no improvement can come to American art except from the courage of individuals and from their solitary concentration, from lonely daring like Degas', Cézanne's and Daumier's. The Whitney Museum would indeed "grow and increase in importance as we ourselves grow," if it discovered such work and brought it before the world. Yet the beginnings of merit are hard to detect in times like ours where every artist forges out a canon for himself. In the Middle Ages and in Antiquity, when everybody was working in an accepted canon, it was an easy matter to see who was doing it best. However, since the very existence of the Whitney Museum is a miracle, might it not, perhaps, by a further miracle, discover such hidden and important work, even though the importance of such work does not usually appear until long after the artist is dead?

A. Hyatt Mayor

DANCE CHRONICLE

DANCE CREDOES AND THE "GREEKS"*

ALL dance credoes seem to lead to the same well-worn path. In our Western world no matter whether the local dancer is of the self-professed "classic" or "romantic" or "modern" faith, he relates himself genealogically to the Greeks even if he performs Siamese, Japanese, Slavic, African, Central-European, Spanish folk or ritual dances; whether his medium is ballet (pure or à la Russe up to any painter in vogue in Paris), Duncan, Dalcroze, Delsarte, interpretive-musical, or interpretive-unmusical; or "modern" in the sense of dancing to modern music — Bach, for example, being less modern than Honnegger — or modern in the sense of either Cubist painting, or of Central-European "philosophic"-expressionist, health-acrobatic, abstract-acrobatic, "tragic-disillusionist"-acrobatic, macabre-acrobatic adaptations in the divagations of the popularised Cubist mannerism.

How this Greek relationship is established I cannot say — not even after reading the credoes. I do know, however, that a dance credo must begin with the "fact" that in Greece the dance came first, and that from it issued drama and music, or vice versa — depending upon your historian or philologist. Dancing came first, at any rate. Then you make an ecstatic reference to the "health"

*Excerpt from an essay on contemporary dance.

ANGNA ENTERS "HIGH-LIFE, 1888"

of the Greeks, and their worship of "beauty". It is unnecessary to mention the perverted forms this worship took, unless as Mr. Jack Dempsey once said rather sensibly of Mr. Gene Tunney's Shakespeare lecture: "It's O.K. if it helps his racket any." Having thus paid obeisance to the Greeks you may thereupon make your aesthetic departure — naturally, in the direction of your own credo.

At this point the correct procedure is to say that "dancing is not" — for all official dance credoes must begin negatively — ballet; (just) interpretation; spiritual interpretation; musical interpretation; visual musical interpretation; musical movement; (just) movement; pantomime; theatrical; untheatrical. (If your bent is imitative, point out that Shakespeare was a plagiarist, or make a reference to "influence", and then attack your model in that aspect of his work which you most "admire", or, if you are capable of true cunning, do not attack but praise it — and you surely will receive critical absolution of being an imitator.) Only when you have made this beginning is it correct to say that dancing is pure spirit; pure music; pure movement; pure interpretation; pure "classic"; pure abstraction; or just "pure". And be sure to back up your assertion with some great name. Wagner, for example, in defense of "Greek" movement to his unGreek music. Or Nietzsche in defense of "modern" repressed movement (or machine-imitations) to decadent contemporary music. There is no danger of detection in using such illustrations as adults in general pay no attention to what dancers say. However, as it is traditional for dancers to suffer such "Philistinism" — especially in America — this is to be expected.

* * * * *

It will have been observed that the irony of the preceding paragraphs is very broad. Yet that irony is not half so broad as that of most perfectly sober dance credoes. Any performer who has anything to communicate has first to break through this accretion of nauseous cobwebby patter. This ignorant lip-service to what are refreshing moments in the history of the human spirit — such as the flowering of Greek culture, and the Renaissance — with cloudy, "spiritual", unGreek, mock-Wagnerian-tragic gush must be ridiculed if dancing is to overcome the contemptuous suspicion with which it is regarded. It is in that cause that these notes have been written — not to project any personal credo.

The word "classic" has come to be used as a threat meant to

inspire awe. A classic is a *living* work, not one that is finished. Many dancers seem to use the term classic in the sense of old, or finished. "What was good enough for dancers a hundred years ago, or twenty, is good enough for me." The dance world seems to think that a classic is a Greek statuary figure — or any design on a Greek frieze or vase — and that imitation of the postures and draperies of that figure makes one's composition classic.

It is time that the dance world realized that the Classic is not necessarily Greek; that it is a term that is — for our present purposes — opposite to Romantic. And that, for example, while the actual imitated Greek postures may in themselves be classic, their contemporary rendition may be romantic. Furthermore, the ballet form though classic— and not in the Greek sense, incidentally — may be (and almost certainly is, nowadays) romantic in performance, whether at the Metropolitan Opera House or by the Russian Ballet. (This is not an objection, but merely a statement.) All that was Greek is not classic, or even admirable. Our picture of Greece is limited in every respect, may in fact be our world picture of an ideal rather than an actuality. Even the clearest vision of Greece is inescapably seen in terms of our own time, its form — prejudices and wishes, individual and general. In fine, that all that we consider to be classic is not Greek alone — it might be pre-Greek, such as Chinese, Egyptian and ancient Eastern art generally, or post-Greek.

I have no credo — save the one that is implicit in my work. I believe it would be a presumption for me — after only six years of presenting my "Compositions in Dance Form" — to extract a set of laws from my work for all workers in movement. Credoes, invariably, are based upon the dancer's limitations. There are, however, two sentiments to which I subscribe. One was said by Plato. "*The beautiful motion is that which produces the desired result with the least effort.*" The second is my own. "*Dancing is composition in movement.*"

ANGNA ENTERS

FILM CHRONICLE

GARBO AND DIETRICH

A REMARKABLY gawky Swedish woman whose hands moved and gestured in a disconcerting manner appeared, a long time ago in movie history, in a shoddy Blasco Ibañez story, called *The Torrent*. The woman had a scrawny neck, her head was set high, too high, above her shoulders, her features were irregular, her body thin, angular. At times she looked downright ugly, when her face twisted itself. She was a protegée of Maurice Stiller who never had, however, a chance to direct her in America, and she was the most remarkable woman ever to appear on the screen. But it wasn't until, in *Flesh and the Devil*, she had embraced John Gilbert lengthily on green-house floors, among hedges, in front of meaninglessly painted scenery that audiences became acutely embarrassed and recognized the compulsion of Greta Garbo.

Much more recently, a woman whose thighs and legs are shapely and whose bosom tends to Teutonic fullness was discovered in Germany by Josef von Sternberg. The resemblance of her pointed face to Garbo's was enough to make the discovery noteworthy. She appeared, for the first time, with Emil Jannings in *The Blue Angel*. The resemblance could not be denied. In *Morocco*, her first picture to be shown in this country, efforts were made to heighten the likeness to Garbo. Marlene Dietrich, to cast a shadow, had to stand in some of the light Garbo gave off.

There is considerable rightness in Dietrich's position. Garbo is the archetype of which Dietrich is the prettier variation. From the type and its variation may come a fashion of appearance, a manner of beauty to which women will strive to approximate, much as women once assiduously cultivated goitres to have the full-throatedness of the ladies in Rossetti paintings. Fashions in woman's beauty incline only rarely toward the healthy. Health can be seen in a glance. Some distortion, some slight deformation must be present to bring the interested second look. Enamel, powder, belladonna and paint do not increase the health of a woman's look: they disguise or emphasize one feature over the other, so that the face is distorted. The fashion in women's beauty may be, more importantly conditioned by the fact that men, all over the country, see Garbo

and Dietrich films. Men may get the trick of looking at a woman for her resemblance to one or the other and look to see, if the type becomes predominant, what they are supposed to see. Dietrich, the variant on the type, is more likely to be the easier model than Garbo herself; simply because Dietrich is more ordinary looking, her figure is more feminine, her face more regular, and because her face and figure are less definite than Garbo's. Garbo will remain unique; approachable as Dietrich approaches her but not to be imitated in her absolute femininity which radiates from a body unlike any other woman's body save the ugliest and the drabbest.

What one remembers of the two women, after the first effect of their striking facial likeness to each other has worn off, is the contrast between them: Garbo walking with long steps, just short of a stride, her straight flat body tilted back a little, humping up and down as she walks past cafés in *Inspiration*, and Dietrich taking off her high-heeled slippers and ploughing stocking-footed through sand in the last scene in *Morocco;* Dietrich's wide-open eyes, rolling round like the cat's on her lap, in a scene in *Dishonored*, and Garbo's heavy-lidded gaze at her lover in *Susan Lenox;* Garbo coming down a flight of stairs and pausing at the foot, in *The Mysterious Lady*, and Dietrich looking over her shoulder in *Morocco;* Garbo standing by a window where the light and rain corrugated her face and body in *Flesh and the Devil* and Dietrich flinging open a door in *Dishonored;* Garbo running as if she were pigeon-toed, Dietrich standing still almost stolidly.

Recalling these various attitudes recalls the fact that Dietrich has had but one director and a good director, whatever his very outstanding faults. Garbo has never had a decent director, with the possible exception of Sutherland who directed her in *White Orchids*. It is even possible that Dietrich, in the hands of another director, would lose certain qualities and gain others, that Garbo, under competent guidance, would excel and exalt herself. But there are good enough reasons for doubting that either of the two women can act. Garbo stood at a window-casement, in *Romance*, chattered Italian with an organ-grinder and was magnificent. Fundamentally, the moment, rich in glamour as it was, was only a striking attitude which induced a pleasure similar to the pleasure a strain of music might induce. The moment gave, of course, the illusion of acting, for it seemed to sustain, amplify and clarify the character as well as give pleasure. Acting, none the less, of the first order, depends upon more than glamorous moments; acting depends almost entirely

upon transitions from one instant to the next. If it did not, then the yelping of Ruth Chatterton in any given picture would be acting, and the wooden charm of Gary Cooper, restraint. Acting is not, naturally enough, simply effecting transitions; but an actor's "big scene" must always come as consummation of lesser moments. Any play that were built in a succession of climaxes of character or action or of intensified moments would become, finally, a series of hollow echoes. It is the gap between the intensified moments that the actor must bridge with himself. In the movies, no opportunity exists for such transitions. The moment in a movie can be left where it is — finished — or the arbitrary camera can shift to a close-up, to a totally different scene, to the face of a clock, to almost anything. On the stage, the actor's own body must continue, with what has just happened still to be woven into the next gesture, the next word. There can, literally, be no way of telling whether Garbo or Dietrich can act.

Actually, there is no reason why they should act, in the strict sense of the term. The handicap of accent makes it necessary that they speak as meagrely as possible; and Dietrich's voice is interesting and varied enough and Garbo's rich enough to add to their personal beauty. The most vital element in any actor's manner, the way he speaks his lines, is eliminated at the very start. Then too, the continuous feeling an actor has for his part has no place in the movies. For, even if the radical method of some of the Russian directors be excluded, the fact stands that a movie is made up in the cutting-room. What is seen of Garbo and Dietrich is what is put together from a variety of shots. No whole person is constantly before the eyes, but instead an arm, an enlarged face, a shoulder, a full length view; and out of these distortions of the real person the eye constructs the radiance, the charm of the two women. If a person looking at a photograph of Jean Cocteau's hands (reproduced in a recent number of *The New Review*) can feel the hands are the hands of a man who has suffered, of a martyr, it is not so difficult to see how studied attention to emphasis, to catching an attitude and holding it indefinitely, makes possible the amazingly varied richness of Garbo's appearances. Because of the nature of the movies, none of the great parts is possible to Dietrich or Garbo. We have to be content with attitudes and the feeling they stir in us. Each time one thinks, say, of Garbo speaking the lines, "Give me my robe, put on my crown", it seems possible, Swedish accent and all. Once one recalls the whole play as a play, one realizes *Anthony and Cleopatra* is not constructed, could not even be adapted, to the momentary

method of the screen. If the play were simply photographed, what is known as Garbo would be gone. Those disappearances of her face and, an instant later, the appearance of her back turned, would have no meaning in a simple record of a play. All that goes to make up any movie would be lost.

Things of great worth on the stage are, too, lost when a play is put in the movies, particularly continuous movement, which is something quite different from continuous motion. The temper of moods produced by the stage, in, for example, Chekov's *The Cherry Orchard*, and by the screen, in Eisenstein's *Romance Sentimentale*, is inevitably different in means and substance and effect; even though the two pieces cited may have a vaguely corresponding likeness of intended effect to each other. It is the same with acting. When the talkies swept the silent pictures off the screen, quantities of actors from the stage went to Hollywood and Long Island. They differed in competence; but they emerged as all alike and no longer as actors. Some of them were successful, but they were not successful because they were good, or even bad, actors. The simple reason lay in the medium of the movies. If out of the piece-meal array of any one of them in a film the audiences could construct a personality — it needed no more than a shapely nose, an awkward walk, a way of twisting the mouth, for its foundation — they were successful. Acting, as acting is traditionally and correctly conceived, is a quality foreign to the movies. Acting simply cannot be included in the movies, any more than sound can be included in a painting. It is not any actor's fault; it is not Garbo's or Dietrich's fault; it was not, even, Sarah Bernhardt's fault in her film of Queen Elizabeth; it is the fault of nothing but the medium. And a limitation is no fault at all.

It seems simple enough to say, then, that out of shots of any woman, or a number of women, an amazing personage could be built up on the cutting-room table. If it weren't for the quick attachment that audiences form for the real person, who is shown in pieces and poses to them, such a procedure might be possible. But the distortions of the movie, like the distortions of any other art, give rise to actual feelings which reach beyond what is immediately presented to the eye, to the intention which creates the distortions. Thus, over and above the scraps any Garbo or Dietrich film offers is the glamour of the women, which has nothing to do with acting, but with the actual feminine being of Greta Garbo and Marlene Dietrich.

KENNETH WHITE

MUSIC CHRONICLE

ELEKTRA AND WOZZECK

A SINGLE hearing of each makes *Elektra* seem the more complete and integrated work of art. The flow of sound fits continuously to the words, and the unobtrusive setting and costuming give the eye just enough occupation without overdistraction. Reiner's great ability tied together all loose ends in a sweeping pace of relentless excitement. There is little else to be said about a piece of conducting many steps above mediocrity and one or two below the perfection of inspiration.

One thing stands out in memory: Matzenauer's climatic entrance trailing her scarlet robes and jangling with gold chains, tottering heavily on a tall cane, the monstrous personification of lechery and fear. The most exciting moment in the score seemed the working up to this scene, the procession of torches and bovine horns swaying across the openings of the colonnade. The trampling, lowing and flashing in the orchestra reached a tensity impossible to surpass in opera.

As an entity the music has scarcely aged in the twenty eventful years since its composition. There could be no question, it is Strauss's finest stage work, and though it has not the sheer beauty of *Ariadne Auf Naxos* it has a terror and pity and economy that has undiminished power to stir the spirit. The shape of the work balances its proportions pleasantly in the mind. A period of rhythm strikes fire, forms itself from a void of uncreated sound, pours on through an articulate and conveyed arrangement of climaxes, comes to a point of rest from which rises as easily as morning, a new period of sound. The geographical position of these points of rest upon a visualized keyboard is beautiful and interesting. The servant girls of the inception are driven into the palace by the overseer's whip that crackles with a dull shrillness above a deep pedal point on D. Their clutter is sucked down into the orchestral depths like water swirling down a drain pipe. From this poised instant there rises a black bubble of sound at the entrance of Elektra that rips the glutinous fabric of an ascending scale into the jerking raucousness of her motive with the horrible effort and pain of childbirth. Again, the drunken inconsequence of Aegisthus' scene tapers swiftly to a few plucked strings, and from a consequent

silence rises a harp glissando that bursts a rocket into the cries and clamor of his death struggles. Here the ascending scale has the effect of tearing a veil from the dazzling representation of Vengeance at last complete. An opposite effect occurs at Orestes' entrance into the palace when the evening that shimmers on high strings darkens suddenly to the rumbling and dreadful restlessness of Elektra's caged pacing. Nor does the attentive listener soon forget how the final slow suspension tears itself into the four last leaping chords that hold the exulting fury of a satisfied Nemesis.

Strauss can easily be forgiven his occasional banalities and the Philadelphia Grand Opera Company its couple of lapses (such as the lamentable electric amplification of back-stage noises which perhaps is more to the discredit of that step-child of science, the radio) in the glory of one of opera's few triumphs.

Much praise and gratitude to Mr. Reiner for the hardest task of the evening, Miss Roselle more than astonishingly capable in the second hardest, and Mrs. Bok with the easiest and most necessary.

Unfortunately the *Wozzeck* evening was not nearly so satisfactory. Previous reports of the score from Europe and Philadelphia, made an interesting evening certain and a great deal more possible. The assets were various and splendid: one of the three perfect orchestras, our best conductor of experimental music, our finest scene painter and an efficient cast. Notwithstanding all this, almost everybody was more or less disappointed. Probably no one was bored, but very few were excited.

Our most important grievance is that the music let us down. A gigantic mechanism was set in motion by Stokowski's cradle telephone and by the opening drum roll, like the electrical processes and wires and tubes of *Metropolis* or *Frankenstein*, and one hundred men beat and banged and blew and brayed with astoundingly meagre results. The discovery was on a plane with the one made at Antheil's *Ballet Mechanique* several years ago: eleven pianos do not make eleven times as much noise as one piano, or even nearly as much. In fact they make less than two pianos, chose curieuse but of a varity. Just so eleven successive chirps from the xylophone do not impress the listener eleven times as much as one chirp. The strange and fascinating Schönbergian school of orchestration so well exemplified in *Der Glückliche Hand* that consists of combining a small piece of celesta with a small piece of contrabass to make an odd sound containing an unknown quantity ($2\frac{1}{3}+.02=4x$ as it were) has reached a dead end in *Wozzeck*. Every bar contains a

crash on the tamtam, a flatterzunge, or a violin playing col legno — in other words an abnormality, and a score filled with abnormalities is no more effective than a novel describing a get together between M. de Charlus, Christine of Sweden, the Marquis de Sade and Sacher-Masoch. For a single act the peculiar noises are valid and rouse the emotions they are intended to (possibly this is the reason the second scene seemed the most beautiful and effective in the whole work). But during the long second act they lose their power and clutch, so that when the real climax is reached in the third act all Berg can do is pare down to the celebrated single B in one case, and revert to a normal diatonic method in the other.

The failure of the orchestration aggravates the disorganization of the harmonic series — progression it cannot be called, for nothing progresses. B follows A with no more reason and logic than A following B, and a continuous line escapes at every other instant. What looks well on paper frequently does not come off in performance. The hunting chorus, for example, that builds a chord of the notes of the diatonic scale, is exciting to the eye but an inchoate blur to the ear. This is true of all Berg's attempts to superimpose a logic, including the gigantic formal structures which he presses like a net over the escaping mass, working inward from the outside instead of outward from a center. The most attentive ear cannot follow the passacaglia theme through its ramifications nor does it care to.

The important question is whether the music conveys what it should — an appropriate and intensifying emotion. There is no question that a mood is perfectly conveyed — a mood of horror and mental torture, of great grinding wheels and helpless dust, of mockery and futility. The individuals are much less clear. The figures that revolve about the haunted soldier are shadowy around the edges. Nor was this the fault of the singers: Mr. Ivantzoff was as good as could be imagined and Miss Roselle very nearly so. The fault lies in the stifling texture of the work from which nothing can stand out but a hammer blow. In spite of all these defects there are moments of real greatness and beauty. The scene of gathering brush in the twilight field holds a unique terror and excitement. The rolling drums and the musical equivalent of the fading light leading on the military march and cradle song are as good as anything in recent German music, and the spreading ripples of the suicide pool hit the nail precisely on the head.

ROBERT H. PITNEY

BOOK REVIEWS

MAN AND ORDER

PROSPECTS OF HUMANISM. *By Laurence Hyde. Charles Scribner's Sons.* 1931. $3.50.

ESSAYS IN ORDER. *By Jacques Maritain, Peter Wust and Christopher Dawson. Macmillan Co.* 1931. $2.00.

CIVILIZED MAN. *By James MacEachran. Faber & Faber.* 1931.

THE titles of these three books could almost be interchanged. The authors are all concerned with humanism, civilized man, and order. Besides the similarity of problems there is considerable agreement as to diagnosis and solution: they are one in finding the modern man sick spiritually; they prescribe in turn an adjustment to the supernatural, transcendant world of religion. But they confront their problems on different levels of experience — as radical sometimes as the Catholic's belief in God, and Hyde's discovery for the necessity for belief, which may or may not lead to real assent — and this difference in the stages of their experience, where the impact of the problem is most personal, is justly reflected in their respective titles. MacEachran has attempted to recover the image of man, *Civilized Man* in its greatest generality, and so finds that "what is the same in both Greek and Hebrew is the idea of the human being, one and the same everywhere, and together with it three results or conclusions which follow from it; the ideal of man as a being cut off from the lower species of nature, the belief in a power beyond man, and the belief that man to a large extent carves out

his own destiny, all of which are really part and parcel of the same underlying belief in the human ideal." Hyde has endeavored to follow his mind with his body, consequently he demands a detailed image of man, and a technique for impressing it upon himself. *The Prospects of Humanism* is the report of an exploration, desperately practical, and with both eyes to action. Hence his "primary concern has been to show that in the end the purely humanistic attitude to the world breaks down, and that in so breaking down it points beyond itself to the superior validity of the religious experience." The classical humanist "is neither properly orientated to the interior, mystical source of the virtues which he is concerned to display, nor able to give expression to his moral consciousness in terms of actual living. From both possibilities he is cut off by his excessive intellectuality, which at once precludes him from achieving that inward identification with the Good which is enjoyed by the mystic, and renders him incapable of spiritualizing the natural in the manner of the poet. He falls between the Word and the Flesh. He has neither the serenity and joy of the man who is above the law nor the vitality and magnetism of the man who is able to realize the spiritual possibilities of the fleeting occasion." The Catholics combine MacEachran's search for definition with Hyde's search for a discipline, a purification, and a renewal of life. For Maritain "The Christian idea is opposed to the modern world . . . to the extent that the modern world is *inhuman*." For Wust Christianity brought "to the human spirit a full awakening, and the vision of the far horizon of human self-knowledge. Christian self-knowledge meant the discovery for the first time of the complete extent of man's metaphysical structure, and of the entire actual and potential range of his history." For Dawson "The only remedy is to be found in man himself — in the renewal of the human image which was once impressed so clearly on our Western civilization, but which has become disfigured and defaced." And being Catholics, these three writers never forget that "Christianity is a creative spiritual force, which has for its end nothing less than the recreation of humanity." Hence their essays, aware of the need of relating the metaphysical, political, and moral planes are *Essays in Order*. Their common attitude is stated by Dawson in the general introduction to the series. "The attempt of the Nineteenth Century to prescribe spiritual ideals in literature and ethics, while refusing to admit the objective existence of a spiritual order, has ended in failure, and today we have to choose between the complete expul-

sion of the spiritual element from human life or its recognition as the very foundation of reality. Insofar as the modern world accepts the latter alternative it can no longer disregard the existence of the Catholic solution, for Catholicism is the great historic representative of the principle of spiritual order — an order which is not the creation of the human mind, but its ruler and creator."

One great advantage the Catholic writers share is their command of metaphysics. This command of metaphysics enables their definitions to be at once more precise and more suggestive, their analysis of the modern man more exact and more closely related to the psychology of man at other periods. Their superiority of definition can be seen by contrasting some definitions of culture. Maritain believes in metaphysics. His culture is "the rational development of the human being considered in all its generality . . . culture or civilization is the expansion of the peculiarly human life, including not only whatever material development may be necessary and sufficient to enable us to live an upright life on this earth, but also and above all the moral development, the development of the speculative and practical activities (artistic and ethical) peculiarly worthy of being called a human development." MacEachran is shy of metaphysics. He believes in "practical philospohy of an ethical kind, and its aim is to inquire first and foremost what is the purpose of the universe, whence in some measure may be derived the purpose of man." Later he states that "it is the will of God which gives form and aim and purpose to the universe" and that the will of God "as we know it in this universe, is a force and limitary means of control and has itself no positive content." So it seems that the modest effort of ethical philosophy to know the purpose of the universe fails. MacEachran comes to define culture. "Culture I shall use for an epoch which can be called creative in 'works' and 'civilized' as a term for the men who take part in creation and who appreciate the creative work which has been produced." Hyde distrusts metaphysics, or at least those metaphysicians he has read. The true philosophers' affinities "will be with such thinkers as Pascal, Nietzsche, Schopenhauer and Coleridge" who have brought their "metaphysics into a fruitful relationship with the most humble and ephemeral circumstances of life." Before such intellectuals as Eliot and Fernandez: "We cannot resist the impression that they are making it very much more difficult than it need be." For Hyde culture is "the expression of the more lofty tendencies in the soul." Similar to their greater accuracy of definition is the

Catholic superiority in placing contemporary man against the background of the Renaissance. Maritain finds the Renaissance a "courageous, untiring effort to make human nature yield its maximum earthly output." As man is "detached from all the sacred elements of being" (to use Wust's phrase) he is turned back on himself and there results "a general progress in *assumption of self-consciousness . . . the reflex age.*" History since then has produced three moments: the classical moment of our culture with the magnificent fruits of Christian naturalism; the *bourgeois* moment which takes sides against the supernatural; and "the moment of materialist *pessimism*, the *revolutionary* moment when man, irrevocably considering himself to be his own last end and unable any longer to endure the machinery of this world, engages, as we see in Russia of the present day, in deliberate battle against natural law and its author and undertakes to produce under a radical atheism an entirely new humanity." MacEachran refuses the word Renaissance to a single period of history and defines it in terms of the series of imitations of Greece, that of Rome, of the Thirteenth Century, of Italy, France, and England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, and lastly of the Germany of Herder, Goethe, Schiller and Kant. "In every case the same thing is reborn and what it is is this: *The art of seeing the universal in the individual, and in portraying the universal, revealing what is the substance of man.*" Although MacEachran does not derive the modern man from the Renaissance he describes various "streams" which have united to decompose him: individual self-expression and feeling of nationalism, Baconian utilitarianism, the naturalism of Rousseau, and the biological evolutionary movement. But there is no general idea coordinating these streams of thought; they are not understood as a whole as in Maritain's formula "*humanism dissociated* from the Incarnation." Hyde does not attempt to conceive the modern man against the perspective of history, to understand where and for what reasons the spiritual side of man's nature, which he finds lacking, was misconceived and obscured. What he sees is "that the Victorians in solving their problems have only presented us with another of even more formidable dimensions: that of preventing the emancipated modern from exercising his newly acquired liberty in a destructive, wasteful, and ignoble fashion." One suspects that this cramped vision of a thinker whose intellectual instincts are so nearly right is owing in part to his indifference to metaphysics and in part to the false alternative which he offers us between the classicist who "can

discover only disintegration and decay" and the imaginative modern "whose strength lies in the fact that he is able to detect the modes in which the new life is beginning to manifest itself amidst the desolation which accompanies the death of the old order." The determining factor between the modernist and the classicist "is in the blood." But if one's blood flows for modernism then our primary obligation lies "not in orientating ourselves by the landmarks set up in the Past, but in apprehending as discerningly as possible the nature of the new life which is coming." Hence the conclusion "that the attitude of our traditionalists is simply *irrelevant* to the modern situation." The fallacy behind Hyde's alternative is obvious. What is irrelevant, because unknowable, is the future. What is important is the present, and this both classicists and modernists unite in contemplating as closely as possible. What is immeasurably helpful is the past, since that "Changeless" "the immutable self within" "that central Object which at once inspires the individual with humility and serves for him as the sustaining force of inspiration and power" which Hyde is arguing for existed no less then than now, and far better and more completely then did individuals succeed in adjusting themselves to it. In practice, as illustrated by Hyde's book the dismissal of the past leads one to study Clive Bell, Powys, Murray and Babbitt instead of, say Aristotle.

As the Catholics are more expert in metaphysics, in definition, and in historical analysis, so too, when it comes to describing the nature of ideal man, they excel MacEachran and Hyde in concrete portrayal. For Christ the son of man is theirs to imitate with a fullness and consistency derived from the Gospels, the Fathers, the doctors of the Church, and centuries of saintly practice such as no non-Catholic can claim. When Wust answers with the aid of a picture what is "the only possible reply" to the meaning of our "annihilation of values" he speaks with the authority of a true disciple. "I have often sat meditatingly before an Italian bookmarker, which I discovered between the leaves of a Dante. On this bookmarker there is a very original little picture. In the midst of a flowery spring landscape stands a tall cross. Christ hangs upon it, His downward glance movingly expressive of the anguish He suffers. At the foot of the cross sits a man wearing a cowl, his face supported in his hands and softly sobbing to himself. He is Francis. Everywhere around him and around the cross there is loneliness — dreadful, terrible loneliness — for all men have fled, and he alone

has remained. Beneath the picture are the words, L'amore che non è amato. 'Love that is not love.' Further comment is unnecessary. L'amore che non è amato." When MacEachran for whom there is no Incarnation and no Resurrection approaches the cross we behold a divided disciple. In spite of the piety and devotion and the eloquence of his prayer he imposes his own terms upon the cross, and from the passion derives a peace which no non-Catholic has a right to. His pilgrimage is so human that we almost forget that he is trying to receive the consolations which the Catholic son of God brings us while believing only in the son of man. This unconscious deception is evident in the preparations for his pilgrimage. Before departing for Calvary MacEachran distinguishes the Greek belief in cycles from the Hebrew belief in the "singularity and uniqueness of human history in the working onwards and upwards of history, especially Hebrew history, to some final event which should be the real and definite end — Thus in the Crucifixion of the man-god we have a single and unique event, irrepeatable in history, and agonizing to a profounder depth than the agony of the deep tragic hero precisely because of its uniqueness and singularity, as an historical event." But this event is unique only to the Catholic: it is not to the Jews, it is not to MacEachran. (In fact this interpretation of Jewish history is essentially Catholic and one that no Jew would accept.) To complete his preparations MacEachran defines his tragic hero. "*The civilized man*, as I conceive him, *is neither more or less in the last analysis than the hero of tragedy*." He "is aware, profoundly aware, that as a natural thing, the universe is irrational, and to an unlimited extent hostile to him. But while intuition tells him this, it also tells him there is something more than nature in the universe, more than reason, more than feeling, so that in the hour of collapse, when the curtain falls on his last appearance, the note is not one of pessimism or despair, but of immeasurable and marvelous hope." Thus outfitted with a Jewish view of history which no Jew ever held and the Catholic faith in Christ's divinity in which he does not believe, with the Greek tragic hero deprived of action which was his special quality for the Greeks, and alone in a hostile universe which the Greeks thought worked towards an end, MacEachran sails for the Holy Land. Arrived there he finds that "Christ as a human being is the example of the *supremely civilized* man, the man furthest removed from the animal and on the edge of divinity." On the cross a mystery took place "*and it is this. When he died his will was prefect and itself the limit of restraint.* He, there-

fore, had a will like the will of God and was himself the Other to whom his will deferred." "If ever a will remained to the end, then it was the will of Christ, and if in the resurrection we see a will which still is manifest it is this surely, and like Paul we have good reason to say 'Till now all creation has been in travail,' and like him we can believe that this event was the culmination of the movement of the world. Since this there is no progress and round this the world revolves." Saint Paul preached Christ crucified *and* resurrected. Would he or any Christian since see "in a will which still is manifest" the message of joy which was to transform mankind? MacEachran's will is negative, as he says, and such a will can never lead to love, the essential and ultimate act of will. The extent of MacEachran's insight into the will is seen in his praise of the authors of the gospels who "do not for a moment 'let themselves go' or indulge in violent denunciation of their enemies. They are, in truth, as civilized as any men at any time."

But MacEachran cannot continue in contemplation of the cross, as can Wust, for MacEachran's Christ, though the supremely civilized man, is still a member of a class; he is different in degree not kind; and hence he is not unique as he is to the Catholic. MacEachran must leave the cross for other spiritual pastures to fill out his image of man. He meets with an American humanist and is introduced to the democratic melting-pot technique. "Pythagoras had one idea about the universe, Plato another, Aristotle another, Thomas Aquinas, Newton, Kant, and Einstein likewise have others, and we repeat once again that the true view is found, not by rejecting one in favor of the other, but by comparing the one with the other, and finding what is common to all." Aristotle employed a different method. "In our inquiry concerning the soul it is necessary to state the problems which must be solved as we proceed, and at the same time to collect the views of our predecessors who had anything to say on the subject, in order that we may adopt what is right in their conclusions and guard against their mistakes." If MacEachran is humble before the cross, beguiled by the humanists, he is too much at ease on Olympus. His point of view is that of a tourist, sight-seeing in the museum of the past, and he mistakes an ability to recognize for long acquaintanceship. "I am sure that I could achieve human contact to an unlimited extent with the Greeks, Romans, mediaeval Europeans, and Renaissance Italians, the Chinese in Confucius' age, the Elizabethans and the French of the age of Louis XIV."

The Catholic, committed to metaphysics, member of a Church, gives us a concrete picture of ideal man; MacEachran, wary of metaphysics, indifferent to Church as to state gives us a picture without features; and Hyde, hostile to metaphysics, distrustful of the classicists, attempts no picture at all. Hyde's problem is to quicken the individual, to find values, to purify the soul. He wants to attain personal being, the whole integrated man, and when the heart is established then he will permit the intellect to function. But how, without a conception of being, and some idea of human perfection, he will achieve his end, is difficult to see. But while Hyde does not give us a metaphysics and an ethics he shows us the fierce seriousness of a man trying to find and to live an ethics. "To doubt sincerely and consistently is to be in Hell. And this is insupportable. If the suspension of belief is honest, the outcome must either be a paralyzing despair or a birth into a new mode of consciousness." "Blindness is ultimately of the soul, vision is the fruit, not merely of cerebration, but of sincere aspiration." And though the good man is not described he multiplies his canvases of the unsatisfactory. "What it all comes to is that the average cultivated person is spiritualized at the periphery but not at the core. Everything is all right but the foundations. There is sensitiveness, imagination, logicality, urbanity, but no true serenity, and little poise or power. The man at once charms us with his command of the more superficial levels of experience and disappoints us by his failure to deal with fundamentals. His consciousness is not irrigated from the central fount of his being; the sap has not mounted from the roots. Deep down he is the whole time on the defensive. Although he moves freely and confidently about on the plane of ideas he is defenceless against one ray from the solar plexus. Silence discovers him. When he is deprived of his polished intellectual weapons he finds himself unable to compel or persuade. In spite of all his sophistication he is distressed by the sense of a dreadful void within. Although he knows a great deal, what he *is* is something relatively insignificant." There is one further reason for Hyde's dissatisfaction, which he does not state, possibly because it is an error he has in common with the cultivated person. Not only is it possible to expect too much from culture, but it is equally possible to expect too much from religion. Neither the search for culture, nor the search for God, is a substitute for work, the work of one specific task in life. If one's vocation is within a religious order, then one's task more nearly coincides with the work of religion; the labor of a

contemplative is wholly devoted to the purification of the soul and the worship of God. If one is not a member of a religious order one must submit to the conditions of the world; God must be served through the temporal which has its own peculiar obligations. What shall I do? is Hyde's insistent question and he might ponder Wust's answer. "Believe and do what you will; love and do what you will; pray and do what you will, and that in turn means — go on in every respect with your own work."

Hyde states the essential problem, how is man to attain to personal being, or the good? But since he has neither a metaphysics of being nor an ethics of perfection, he cannot deal effectively with the practical problem of how man can communicate with ultimate being or God, or how he can realize the nature of ideal man in himself. Without an end man cannot determine upon means: Hyde knows that "the modern cultivated person is overestimating his power of maintaining contact with the realm of the spiritual in his present condition"; he knows further that man is unable to arrive at the spiritual through intellect alone. So what remains for Hyde, reason being inadequate, is some form of faith. The office of faith is best exhibited in the Catholic. The problem he states clearly. How is man, writes Dawson, "to bring his life into vital relation with that spiritual reality of which he is but dimly conscious and which transcends all the categories of his thought and the conditions of human experience?" Reason through its own operations arrives at a transcendant being, but the mediator for the Catholic between God and Man, bridging the gap between the supernatural and the natural, is faith, and faith in a special revelation. Without faith we have no access to God. Dilthey, according to Wust, "recognized the necessity of the forces of which faith is the source, but lacked the courage to make the decisive act of faith." Once faith like Aaron's rod strikes the rock of the Church the healing waters of salvation flow. For, as Dawson says, "it is through the sacraments that the Incarnation of the Divine Word is no longer a historical fact, but is brought into vital and sensible contact with the life of the believer. So far from being an alien magical conception superimposed from without upon the religion of the Gospel, it forms the very heart of Christianity, since it is only through the sacramental principle that the Jewish ideal of an external ritual cult becomes transformed into a worship of spiritual communion."

The problem of spiritual communion is only treated on the human plane by MacEachran, since it is civilized man that he as-

pires to be. Art is the supreme form of speech and man raises himself through an imitation of the ideals of the greatest artists. "And so finally it is the Dialogues of Plato which keeps Socrates alive for us, and it is in the work of Dante, of Shakespeare, of Goethe on the one hand, of Phidias, of Michael Angelo, of Donatello on the other, that we find ourselves face to face with the highest human ideals which men have been able to portray.

"And when we are contemplating these works, and as it were, absorbing them, *we are actually doing the greatest thing that men do*, namely, raising our personality to a higher level by an act of imitation, and the very fact that this may sometimes take us years to perform, indicates that we are manifesting in a noble sense the virtue of 'humilitas.'" True as this is we feel ourselves in a spiritual vacuum; we are still in MacEachran's exposition at one remove from the reality which these men contemplated. For "if the question is put, whom then did these imitate, the answer is that since their inspiration does not come from below it must have come from above, and that once more, therefore, we feel that a source there must be somewhere." It is all too simple: not one of MacEachran's tragic heroes, his civilized men, contemplated art as the greatest thing they could do. They contemplated directly, and while art is of inestimable use as a tool, our use of it must culminate in a direct perception of our own. If MacEachran conceives of the contemplation of art as a complete equivalent for the sacraments and for prayer then he must tell us why this leads to actual spiritual communion, to the love of God and of our fellow men. And he must tell us also how this contemplation of art will enable men to transcend the world, as does the mystic whom he so much admires, and arrive at the vision of God.

Besides the sacraments offered us by Dawson and the contemplation of art which is MacEachran's substitute there is prayer. The mind quite apart from revealed religion can arrive at the recognition of God; quite apart from revealed religion, through the analogy of being, it can arrive at some knowledge of Him. The heart can seek Him no less outside a church than within, and resident in the world the soul can struggle to purify itself of weakness and to turn to another life. It is not necessary to be a member of a church to feel about one's belief as does Maritain. "The truth is, a Catholic writer is tortured and terrified by the thought that Catholicism may, perhaps, be judged by the standard of his own insufficiency." "The choice that actually is before us," according to Dawson,

"is not between an individualist humanism and some form of collectivism, but between a collectivism that is purely mechanistic and one that is spiritual." This may be true of us as the world, as collective human beings; it is false of every single one of us as an individual. For the problem before each one of us is not to save civilization, but, as I understand Christian doctrine, to save his own soul, which is the only thing each of us can save. "The intrinsic laws of history," remarks Wust, "and of the human soul are the same at all times and in all places." And for illustration we might consider this passage of Aristotle's, "But though sense-perception is innate in all animals in some the sense impression comes to persist, in others it does not. So animals in which this persistence does not come to be have either no knowledge at all outside the act of perceiving, or no knowledge of objects of which no impression persists; animals in which it does come into being have perception and can continue to retain the sense-impression in the soul: and when such persistence is frequently repeated a further distinction at once arises between those which out of the persistence of such sense impressions develop a power of systematizing them and those which do not. So out of sense perception comes to be what we call memory, and out of frequently repeated memories of the same thing, develops experience; for a number of memories constitute a single experience. From experience again — i.e., from the universal now stabilized in its entirety within the soul the one besides the many which is a single identity within them all — originate the skill of the craftsman and the knowledge of the man of science, skill in the sphere of coming to be and science in the sphere of being.

"We conclude that these states of knowledge are neither innate in a determinate form, nor develop from other higher states of knowledge, but from sense perception. It is like a rout in battle stopped by first one man making a stand and then another, until the original formation has been restored. The soul is so constituted as to be capable of this process."

BERNARD BANDLER II

IF A MAN DIE

THE COMING FORTH BY DAY OF OSIRIS JONES. *By Conrad Aiken. New York, Charles Scribner's Sons,* 1931. $2.

PRELUDES FOR MEMNON. *By Conrad Aiken. New York, Charles Scribner's Sons,* 1931. $2.50.

The Coming Forth by Day of Osiris Jones is, as the introductory note implies, a Book of the Dead; or more exactly, a Dead Man's Book. It is the deceased man's justification of himself by charms, rubrics, and acclamation, that in the *psychostasia* — the weighing of the heart against the feather of truth — he may come forth into the day with the similitude of a god and perform all the transformations which his heart may desire. It is as Osiris the god of the underworld that terrestrial man presents himself in his book of transcripts from the magic texts, since Osiris, overcome by Set the Liar and reconstituted by eating the eye of Horus, was the first to be delivered from the Devourer and to be adjudged "true of voice," his individuality perfect, his soul divine, his words exquisite.

In his coming forth, Osiris Jones desires that he may have rest, food, continuance. Since childhood, only in dreams has he been The Resting One. There must be food for the body, for the mind, for the soul: for the body, such as anyone that he might marry would provide, including vegetables one might raise for diversion. It would seem that to the author of *Discordants* marriage is a sacrament.

"Bread I broke with you was more than bread." But in the case of Osiris Jones it is more difficult to determine to exactly which food category marriage is regarded as belonging. Food for the mind, books; for the spirit, a knowledge of the Absolute. As for continuance, if intellectual children and the love of God are to take the place of progeny in the tribal sense of the term, these substitutes must be good ones.

In his critical writings Mr. Aiken has been honest; he has not influenced doubtful material to make an author appear to advantage, and in the trying of his own conscience he is equally honest. The questions asked are three: must the illusions of childhood end with childhood? must one let love alone? are books one's only friend? His answer is: "I was a rash man in my time." But the heart need merely balance the beam, not counterbalance it.

In *The Coming Forth by Day of Osiris Jones*, which is psycho-realistic poetic drama intentionally distorted, the arrangement is that of the disrelated chapters of a funerary roll or grave book; and as on a late dynastic roll or on one of the Empire there were sometimes illustrations, there arise here — not consecutively — favorite thoughts or might one say vignettes, and certain sensations prominent to the consciousness of Osiris Jones.

I. A magic of white is upon him — of grave clothes, of ivory, of a rose coming to pieces in the hands, of magnolias, of jasmine, of camellias, of pale lamplight, of "white-waved water," of snow, of fog, of clouds, of dunes, of white flesh, of "the white street of pain." II. His "veins are streets," — "a room, a house, a street, a town" — the "hot asphalt" of Broad Street; the house, "red brick, with nine rooms," the asphalt walk in a park, an avenue with a bench, a street outside a theatre, by a subway entrance, beside a graveyard. "Millions of men rush through me," he says. "Which, in this terrible multitude, is I?" III. He is, it seems, a scribe with a reed pen, palette, and ink — a young poet. He says an artist is one who knows "the effect of what he is doing": that sensibility can be accreted, and that by a slow process poetry can be "extended to embrace all that man is capable of feeling and perceiving." IV. The Confession of the Secret Self. Peter Jones was deceptively candid; it now appears that he is generous, magnanimous, tender, sad, greedy, cautious, a fool, somewhat vain, not sure of himself, not mawkish nor callous nor illogical. Ambitious. V. deals with murder. a. Unintentional, with "love abruptly ended." Murder is of the mind the text says. To hurt a person is to murder the person. If the

person is querulous, a slip of the tongue, an accidental coldness, a quarrelsome eye, can be fatal. b. One can murder art by trying too hard. A friend of Osiris Jones is seen engaged in this kind of murder and Osiris Jones is saying, "What cannot be captured, . . . it is no use killing. Brutality is no substitute for magic." VI. The sun disc directing its rays upon a childhood. The words are "yes for no"; "the always lost but always known," and we see the sun a. On a palmetto leaf and on a certain kind of head that smiles in a certain side-long way. b. On death. VII. is of Death. a. Osiris Jones is seen shrinking from the sight of death with the sun on it, and compelled to look at it. When a friend has died of spinal cancer one is permanently saddened. b. is a dream of second death. The mind, "the core of anguish, underground," has been uprooted and the tree of hope turned on its side: the dead lies in full view; a crowd gathers; a school-boy derides red hair; an undergraduate, the cut of the trousers; a man who is sometimes usher at church weddings asks if his friends were ladies and if they read the proper books. The conspicuous thing here is the "disparateness of flesh and word, . . . wisdom's dishevelment, the purpose lamed, / and purposeless the footsteps eastward aimed/" VIII. Music said: a. "your heart is beating, your will is strong / you are walking in a hall of clouds / your hand is cunning and the gods are young / " b. is "a mortal music" by which one is overwhelmed, drugged, and left for dead. As it sounds, two faces appear — the face of one's mother; and a face though kind, which is associated with an Arthurian name and unmercy, which sees one "sinking

> depe depe and deeper darkly down and drown
> drenched and despatched and drunk with more than ether."

IX. is the vindication of the consciousness by the books it has written. Fame is saying to a Narcissus-like figure with chapleted hair, "I know thee and I know thy name, and know / the names of all those gods who dwell with thee. / " The dead is now to be on an equality with Shakspere.

Funerary models have been placed in the tomb: a nursery in which there are Bible tales and fairy tales and tales from Shakespere, "and footsteps pause behind the door —"; a father's office; schoolroom "desks, all carved with names"; a school hospital; a drawing-room; a ballroom; a room in a city hospital; a creaking stateroom with "a majesty of waves / washing the heart, and memory but a night / in which at last a single face is bright. / " There

are also funerary models of costumes — cradle clothes, "a bonnet of angora," "six sailor blouses," "a black velvet jacket," "white flannels," "a dress suit," "a raincoat," a green "tweed hat bought in England," and sundry felts. Undisguised baby-wear in a Kunyoshi painting is permitted and Beaunash's tab collars and mushroom tucks relieve the half-caste motley of cigarette and cosmetic advertisements in a theatre program, but one hesitates before certain poetic implications of the Osiris Jones funerary wardrobe.

"It is the poet's office," Mr. Aiken says, "to delight with beauty and to amaze with understanding," and since Peter Jones was a poet, the comments, speeches, and inscriptions, chosen by him for his grave-book ought to be good ones and some of them are, as where the Face is withdrawn,

> diffused, and more diffused, till music speaks
> under a hundred lights, with violins.

And the timbre and intervals of the cricket, in the Landscape with Figures, show the poet to be the scientist:

> zeek . . . zeek . . . zeek
> . . .
> seek . . . seek . . . seek . . . seek
> . . .
> seek . . . see . . . seek . . . see

He listens.

The nature of the material requires that there be almost as much space as there is text.

> The pauses in the music are not music,
> Although they make the music what it is.

Even so, the text is heavily leaded. One is not always sure whether the note is that of singing or speaking. There is occasionally a quarter-tone jamming of sound that is not unequivocally that. "Orion" as an end-word after "time" seems not so much a variant as another variety. One debates the wisdom of certain joints and conclusions. When the manner is that of prose, as in the medical report, an air of conscious adaptiveness combats interest. But the directive note is unmistakable, and the contrasting strains echo through one another as the elements of an acrostic answer simultaneously in all planes.

In the Osiris Jones the soul must come forth; and in the Preludes,

Memnon symbolizes the burdened sensibility; literally the Amenhotep III colossus at Luxor, cut from a single block of stone, in which a fissure was made by an earthquake — the god who "sang the day before the daybreak came" and reminded the Greeks of Memnon, Aurora's son slain at Troy, waiting in darkness for the dawn, his mother.

Like Osiris Jones, the Memnon is broken. He is not interested in dynasties, nor the stoop of the vulture nor the presentation crocodile nor the yacht nor the harper who pats his mouth with his hand to make a warbling sound. He is asking, IF A MAN DIE SHALL HE LIVE AGAIN? and what Buddha and Confucius and Christ have said about this, and what would make mortality's instinct for continuance valid and everlasting? Christ said that since childhood was a reward for existing, the attitude of mind which prevailed in childhood could, if duplicated, be attended by the same illusions: humility by hopefulness; receptiveness by abundance — virtue being a form for which humanity is appropriate matter, not a thing to be vain of. If one's hands are clever they are not one's hands but the hands of humanity.

But the Memnon finds that whether one is arrogant or is matter of fact about one's self, frustration is the concomitant of maturity. He resists the "causeless melancholy that comes with rain," he touches "the cold treble" of the piano. How is it "other men could live so simply" and "go unscathed?" Or "do they lie?" He sees and can say pain is "the sombre note that gives the chord its power," but what he reflects upon is the fashion pain has of returning to what pained it. He tends to curse both "The visitor who comes and sits too long, / Angels who come too seldom." He was born when the sun was at the meridian and it is dark "in his strange world."

The sense of strangeness, may we say, is an illusion. Those with keen perceptions may suffer more than others, but the same sufferings and desperations are common to each and in almost the same way. One goes into a friend's study. The books, prints, convenient desk, make one feel that one could work in such a place. Others have a similar impression of one's own surroundings — that seem to one at times like a subway at the rush hour, or a way-station on a cinder-bank. Sensibility — or is it self-pity — transmitted from childhood — infects any air and can retain in any surroundings the message from the S–4: "Is there no hope?"; the impact of Sir Walter Scott's debt; the recollection of a bird fascinated by a snake.

One encounters also in the Preludes, that polygon of frustration, woman: the meagre intense poison of the spider, the bat that turns and clings to you however you may turn, the octopus with arms that reach out to you from all directions, the sea that drops from under you or pounds you from above. This is woman — "literalness," "abysmal nothingness," "staleness," the untaught "tendency to italics." Some feel their own sex to be more inane than the other, some the other to be more inane than their own. Some find both inane. It is not possible to differentiate in favor of either, according to Professor Papez' collection of brains at Cornell. They are, as it were, alligators. If one wishes to look upon Mrs. Thrale, Lady Waller, and the Countess of Pembroke, as exceptions, and upon Socrates as the rule, one may. There are, however, men and women who feel themselves unworthy of the devotion bestowed on them by overburdened, unself-indulgent, highly endowed members of the other sex; and for the management of difficult persons there is a technique. Woman's beauty is carrion or not, depending on the way it is worn. Love is more important than being in love, as memories of childhood testify; but even for the lesser thing there are preservatives. If by some miracle of felicity a man is unselfish and his wife is unselfish, no technical harmonizing of marriage is required. But usually if a marriage is to stand, a technique in maintaining it must be known to the less selfish of the two. If husband and wife are equal in selfishness and ferocity, the marriage, of course, cannot stand. One may have for woman's humiliating battery of fascinations, "Gehenna's smile." One may wish to let love alone. As instances of impersonalism, there are Sir Isaac Newton, Washington Irving, Henry James, and Lord Balfour. Mr. Aiken says, "Must I / . . . Renounce my food, hating mankind and all / Because this lizard's eye has . . . *looked* at me? / Absurd! It is an indigestion merely. / . . . Or too much looking at the moon, too little / Upon the sun. The print I read's too small: I will get larger books, with larger margins. / I will cut down the tree that shades my window. I will go to music — "

But music is aconite. In enjoyment there is frustration; and in what is ascetic. "I sit in my chair and work and work," Mr. Aiken says; "Add, substract, / Divide or subdivide with verbs and adverbs" as the therapists say one should, and the room is far from luxurious; while a man with a mediocre brain and ornamental family, lives on his father's dower. To wonder if the "feminine keen eye" that one no longer pleases, would admire the accomplished

arithmetic if it saw it, makes matters no better. Art, however, is not an overture to a neighbor. One's work would not be the potent and accomplished thing it is, if it were done for any reason but to fulfil the instinct of technical mastery. What scientist thinks of being thanked for what he does? It is a pleasure to be so gifted that one's work is important as science is important. There is no pleasure subtler than the sensation of being a good workman; and in work there is consanguinity — unconscious as a rule but sometimes conscious. Shakspere "moulded and melted / The things he loved and hated, lest he melt / His own heart's tallow." There were doubtless compensating presences, but his real consanguinities were posthumous. They were not William Holgrave nor someone else, nor Anne Hathaway. And all die — Hardy, Conrad, Rimbaud, Verlaine. "Cheops and Jones indifferent grass will cover." But "dust cannot hold what shines beyond the dust."

The terrestrial mind makes ascriptions of praise to the terrestrial mind and is damned by them, reiterating the negative confession of Osiris Jones, or, like Memnon, protesting the verdict. To the sceptic the ritual of the feather and the conscience is not convenient. The lurking sense of an adhered-to attitude on the part of those who regard themselves as religious, stands in the way of what they might do for one. When we get away from the mystical, however, we put ourselves under the power of nature and nature is cruel. Sir Thomas Browne felt that he spoke as a physician when he said the pulse is not the main indication of life and that unless we are part of the "inextinguishable core" of life there is no warmth for flesh to simulate, "no heat under the Tropick; nor any light, though I dwelt in the body of the Sun." Ask a servant for something, and you will presently get it, but God is not a servant. Man, when not making complaint to man, usually overlooks the fact that he is asking a supernatural question and expecting a mortal answer. Furthermore, it is not possible to prepare for a crisis in the middle of a crisis. To start a large turbine you cannot throw steam into the drum; the inertia is too great; you turn it by means of small engine until it has been stepped up to the point at which steam can be added. If you desire a certain result, you must put a train of circumstances in motion that will bring it about; in this way, and in this way only, will you be able to defy Satan or the Devourer or the Fissured mind when it puts its hand on your throat and tells you you were meant to die and not to live.

Misgiving, however, is an evidence of subterranean power. The

Preludes are full of this power and of a music correspondingly rich. In them one forgets, beyond interest in recollecting it, the snare-drum multiplicity of undergraduate adverbs in the early prose. Banality and cheapness are damped out; and there is no trace of doggerel, though to be exact, the clash of the symphony drowns it.

The musical principle of restatement after contrast, exemplified in the Osiris Jones and in previous work, is here justified. The unrhymed pattern is as much an "algebra of enchantment" as the rhymed:

> Angelic power, divinity, destruction,
> Perfect in itself — the sword is heartshaped,
> The word is bloodshaped, the flower is a coffin,
> The word is everlasting —

There is the sense of "a surf of leaves, when the wind blows;" or of mid-ocean when "Rain with a shrill seethe sings on the lapsing waves."

> It is a wound in air. It is last year.

A use of vowels such as this, compensates for any unillusions. It is the chiselled pianissimo of experience that sets as a chord at the end of the XVth Prelude, "See that the heart that dreamed this thing be safe." And in Prelude XV one recognizes the characteristically irreproachable diminuendo by dactyl:

> Dead hand, you touched the heart of time, you knew
> Whispers of silence, the mute path of God;
> Hot chaos knew with its rank arteries,
> And anguish, with its blood . . . .

As art, Mr. Aiken's work is fruitful; and there is in it a quality for which it is scarcely permissible to thank the author — its probity.

MARIANNE MOORE

TRADITIONAL MASTERY

THE SHORTER POEMS OF ROBERT BRIDGES. *Enlarged Edition. Oxford.* 1931. $2.50.

This latest edition of the lyrics of Dr. Bridges represents a selection, sanctioned by himself before his death, and not a complete edition. It omits Prometheus, Demeter, Eros and Psyche, and The Growth of Love, which were contained in the Poetical Works (Oxford, 1914) and contains a very restricted and, but for the omission of the epigram, *Who goes there*, a wholly satisfactory selection from two small volumes published subsequently to the Poetical Works. It contains the first fifteen only of the Later Poems (Poetical Works), omitting the Odes. The omissions represent no serious loss, I suspect, barring the epigram I have already mentioned and a few of the sonnets from The Growth of Love, especially number fifty-one, which described so beautifully the poetical quality that Dr. Bridges was to realize in his greatest work:

> O my uncared-for songs, what are ye worth,
> That in my secret book with so much care
> I write you, this one here and that one there,
> Marking the time and order of your birth?
> How, with a fancy so unkind to mirth,
> A sense so hard, a style so worn and bare,
> Look ye for any welcome anywhere
> From any shelf or heart-home on the earth?

Dr. Bridges' meters have been so often and so fruitlessly discussed that I shall omit entirely to analyze them, though his importance as a subtle and learned renovator of English meters is sufficiently great. It is my belief that he has been long enough patronized as a sugar-coated pill for those who wish to brush up on their metrics, as a minor manipulator of outworn graces, and that he should be recognized once and for all as the sole English rival of Hardy in nineteenth-century poetry, as, in all likelihood, considering his formal versatility, the range of his feeling, and the

purity of his diction, a diction so free from any trace of personal idiosyncrasy that a successful imitator of it could never be detected as an imitator but would appear only as that most unlikely of phenomena, a rival, that he should, I say, in all likelihood be recognized as the most valuable model of poetic style to appear in the language since Dryden.

Since Dr. Bridges has never been popular, especially in America, I shall risk a very roughly classified list of the poems on which I base my opinion, all of them to be found in the present collection. Short lyrics, first level: *Wherefore tonight so full of care*, *The birds that sing on autumn eves*, *Love not too much*, *The north wind came up*, *Why hast thou nothing*, *The south wind strengthens to a gale*, *As our car rustled swiftly*, *How should I be to love unjust*, *Beautiful must be the mountains*, *Whither O splendid ship*. Short lyrics, second level: *Clear and gentle stream*, *The wood is bare*, *Poor withered rose*, *O bold majestic downs*, *Again with pleasant green*, *Behold! the radiant spring*, *Perfect little body*, *My bed and pillow are cold*, *The hill-pines were sighing*, *April adance in play*, *The sea keeps not the Sabbath day*, *Will love again awake*. Longer lyrics at a slow tempo, first level: *Sad sombre place*, *Joy*, *sweetest life-born joy*, *How well my eyes remember the dim path;* second level: *Voyaging northwards*. There are in addition two fine epigrams in this volume, *Mazing around my mind*, and *Askest thou of these graves;* there are several fine occasional sonnets, at least two of which, *Beloved of all to whom that Muse is dear*, and *Folk alien to the Muse*, would cast no discredit on Milton; there are two admirable didactic poems of some length, *Thou art a poet*, *Robbie Burns*, and *Je donnerais pour revivre à vingt ans*, of which the second deserves a place very nearly at its author's first level of achievement; and there is a formal ode, *Assemble all ye maidens*, no whit inferior, I suspect, to Dryden's Ode on the death of Mistress Anne Killigrew.

Dr. Bridges possessed much more curiosity about the possibilities of various forms than has been shown by most of our modern experimenters. Mr. Pound, Dr. Williams, and Miss Moore, for example, have all worked in a straight line, as if impelled by some more or less fanatical dogma, toward a certain form or tempo, and, having once perfected it, have become slaves to it. Miss Moore, indeed, seems to have exhausted the possibilities of her style and to have abandoned writing; even Mr. Stevens writes, or at least publishes, less and less; and Mr. Pound appears to have entered upon "the old age of a watery realist," indulging in looser and looser repe-

titions of cadences and mannerisms in Canto after Canto. In fact, some of his recent Cantos are scarcely more coherent than his correspondence. Dr. Bridges seems to have been fully aware that a change of tempo involves a complete or nearly complete change in the range of feeling perceived, that it opens up, in other words, a fresh field of subject matter; if one follows his career step by step one finds him taking up one tempo after another, exhausting its possibilities (for himself), and dropping each, once he has thoroughly mastered it and before it has mastered him.

The longer and slower lyrics should be approached only after the shorter have been studied, since in the shorter pieces the diction is more concentrated, less consciously toned down, and the quality of the style is more immediately apparent. I quote three stanzas from a fairly early poem entitled Dejection:

> Wherefore tonight so full of care,
> My soul, revolving hopeless strife,
> Pointing at hindrance, and the bare
> Painful escapes of fitful life?
>
> Shaping the doom that may befall
> By precedent of terror past:
> By love dishonoured, and the call
> Of friendship slighted at the last?
>
> By treasured names, the little store
> That memory out of wreck could save
> Of loving hearts that gone before
> Call their old comrade to the grave?

Compare the above lines to the following, from one of the latest lyrics, *Low Barometer:*

> The south-wind strengthens to a gale,
> Across the moon the clouds fly fast,
> The house is smitten as with a flail,
> The chimney shudders to the blast.
>
> On such a night, when air has loosed
> Its guardian grasp on blood and brain,
> Old terrors then of god or ghost
> Creep from their caves to life again. . . .
>
> Unbodied presences, the packed
> Pollution and remorse of Time,

Slipp'd from oblivion, reënact
The horrors of unhouseled crime.

The quality of language over the gap of time is constant. In restraint, economy, richness of feeling, in what I should call an extreme generality or universality of import accomplished with no loss in the specification of the perception, these poems and a few others in the volume will stand the most scrutinizing comparison, I believe, with any of Shakespeare's sonnets. No living poet is capable of such masterly writing, and the number of poets dead is very small.

In his longer and more meditative lyrics, Dr. Bridges achieved a poetry, the norm of which is scarcely more intense than the norm of distinguished prose, but which, thanks to the quality of its diction, syntax and cadence, never falls short of extreme distinction, and which rises at need and without shock from distinction to extraordinary beauty. Poetry of this sort is not inferior to poetry of the shorter and more lyrical sort, though it may be harder to appreciate and is certainly less popular at the present time. It can handle material impossible in the more specialized lyric: what it loses in concentration, it can regain in subtlety of detail, completeness of description, range of material, and structural elaboration. In The Summer House on the Mound (*How well my eyes remember*) Dr. Bridges employed the heroic couplet, the form that traditionally seems to lend itself most readily to discursive writing and wide ranges of feeling within a given composition. The poem describes in retrospect the summer house from which the writer as a child was accustomed to watch passing ships at a distance, through a telescope. The house, the mound, and the distant sea are described quietly and precisely; then comes the close-up view of the decks through the telescope:

There many an hour I have sat to watch; nay, now
The brazen disk is cold against my brow,
And in my sight a circle of the sea
Enlarged to swiftness, where the salt waves flee,
And ships in stately motion pass so near
That what I see is speaking to my ear:
I hear the waves dash and the tackle strain,
The canvas flap, the rattle of the chain
That runs out through the hawse, the clank of the winch
Winding the rusty cable inch by inch,
Till half I wonder if they have no care,

Those sailors, that my glass is brought to bear
On all their doings, if I vex them not
On every petty task of their rough lot
Prying and spying, searching every craft
From painted truck to gunnel, fore and aft, —
Thro' idle Sundays as I have watched them lean
Long hours upon the rail, or neath its screen
Prone on the deck to lie outstretched at length,
Sunk in renewal of their wearied strength.

There follows a description of sailing ships, then a description of the first steam dreadnoughts, one of the most magnificent descriptive passages with which I am acquainted and a passage which, despite its grandeur, does not detach itself from its context:

One noon in March upon that anchoring ground
Came Napier's fleet unto the Baltic bound:
Cloudless the sky and calm and blue the sea,
As round Saint Margaret's cliff mysteriously,
Those murderous queens walking in Sabbath sleep
Glided in line upon the windless deep.

Then come an enumeration of some of the ships, a few intimate details of the poet's family and the old age of the Duke of Wellington, and the half-literary, half colloquial, and superbly handled conclusion:

But now 'tis other wars and other men; —
The year that Napier sail'd, my years were ten —
Yea, and new homes and loves my heart hath found:
A priest has there usurped the ivied mound,
The bell that called to horse calls now to prayers,
And silent nuns tread the familiar stairs.
Within the peach-clad walls that old outlaw,
The Roman wolf, scratches with privy paw.

The poem, despite its discursiveness, is flawless in detail and in structure; despite its hovering near the verge of prose, it is never prosy; and despite the wide range of feeling treated, there are no rhetorical gaps. It is a vision of the rising Victorian empire, all the more moving for its immediate familiarity, for its being a vision from a summer house within sight of the Duke of Wellington's castle. This poem alone was sufficient justification of Dr Bridges' laureateship.

In Elegy among the Tombs (*Sad sombre place*) and *Joy, sweetest*

life-born joy a longer stanza is employed at a comparably slow tempo, the material being dictated by a somewhat more logical intention. To quote from these poems is even more unfair than to quote from the preceding one; so much depends on the structure, musical and logical, of the entire piece. Lines that may seem insignificant in a quoted fragment, take on significance in relation to the whole, take on a significance of a sort that can be established only by the greatest stylists, in fact, since it depends upon the subtlest and most minutely controlled of stylistic relationships. These poems, like so many others by their author, may even appear insignificant when read complete for the first or even the fifth time, only to become profoundly moving on the fifteenth or twentieth. Most readers, unfortunately, are nearly always ready to judge as dull that which surpasses them in technical knowledge or in human wisdom to any very great extent; what is not understood seems bad. And Dr. Bridges so far surpasses nearly any of his readers in these respects, is so utterly free of any impure attraction, any undisciplined "personality", that his genius has been ignored more unjustly than that of any other writer since Landor.

In the last two poems mentioned, in Dejection, and in a good many others, one encounters an attitude that may seem at first glance mere Victorian optimism, and which in a very few pieces (Fortunatus Nimium, for example) comes near to verging on Victorian optimism, but which is, in reality, something far more sombre and intelligent, a more or less classical resignation, with frequently, as in the professedly optimistic close of Dejection and Elegy among the Tombs, an undercurrent of calm and carefully restrained bitterness.

Dr. Bridges has been so often and so angrily compared to his friend Gerard Hopkins that I may perhaps be pardoned for a word on this subject. Hopkins seems to me to have been a truly great poet, though I cannot carry my enthusiasm as far as do his most violent admirers. The qualities that have won Hopkins almost immediate recognition during the past few years are, I fear, the very reasons for his limitations and his definite inferiority to Bridges. The mere fact that a man is a radical technical innovator does not render him a greater poet than the man who is less an innovator; extreme originality of method almost always involves extreme departure from the norm of experience, involves specialization and limitation of feeling. The greatest technical experimenter in English literature is, I suppose, Milton, and he is muscle-bound by his

magnificence and the intricacy of his syntax. When he is not grand, he is grandiloquent; there is no transition between the two in Miltonic blank verse; and he killed English blank verse for two centuries. So with Hopkins: he can express with his violent rhythms an extremely special kind of excitement arising from religious experience, but he can express little else, and even the religious experience is incomplete, for if he does not deal wholly with the resultant excitement, he certainly throws his emphasis very heavily upon it. We are told, for instance, in superbly impassioned verses that the mind has mountains, but the nature of those mountains is never wholly clear. In Bridges the nature of the mountains is absolutely clear — that is, the experience is rendered whole — and the terror of the mountains is not isolated from all other experience but is seen in firm proportion. There is in the metrical experimentation in the present volume of Bridges quite as much originality of thought as in the experiments of Hopkins, coupled with a much more thorough knowledge of English meters and the complexities of feeling involved in their history. Bridges' technique, if the less obviously original of the two, is the more sensitive and the more widely applicable instrument of perception. In saying this, I do not wish it to be thought, let me repeat, that I am blind to the sensitivity or the power of Hopkins, a poet who moves me very deeply.

This limiting effect of the elaborately original may be one reason for the extreme shortness of so many of the most brilliant of contemporary careers: a narrow vein of feeling only can be explored, and once it is finished, the author has got himself so far from a fresh starting point that he lacks either the courage or the vigor to do anything about it; he has systematically deadened himself through specialization. If there is any truth in this supposition, extreme originality of style would appear to be one of the shortest cuts to that condition of atrophy, from which its most fanatical devotees seek, by its means, to escape. On the other hand, traditionalism is not equivalent to dullness; the diction of Dr. Bridges is as fresh and living as that of Dr. Williams; his meters allow him greater freedom, or rather greater range; he is in general a more civilized man. It is to be hoped, for the sake of twentieth-century poetry, that he will receive the study which his own poetry merits.

YVOR WINTERS

HARD WORDS A GUIDE TO THE PERPLEXED

THE BROWN DECADES. *By Lewis Mumford. Harcourt, Brace & Co.* 1931. $3.00.

Lewis Mumford's *Sticks and Stones* as now revised by his *Brown Decades* makes the best general history of architecture in America. But to say that it is the best, is not to say that it is good.

The conclusion of the first book was to the effect that we could have no architecture until we had a different country, a conclusion which will be valueless for, let us say, fifty years. Architectural criticism can have only a dilute effect upon social reformation, while social criticism has no immediate bearing upon architectural practice.

From such a premise as: that in order to have a new architecture, one must have a new society, such a conjecture would logically follow as: that the Aztecs could not have improved their temples until after they had given up human sacrifice. Is it not as natural to conjecture instead that as temples were made fit for ritual, ritual would have developed; and that as ritual developed, the necessity for sacrifice would have decreased? What is conceivable for temple, for ritual, for bloody human sacrifice, is conceivable also for city, for daily life, and for bloodless human sacrifice. One's preference for either of these conjectures over the other depends upon whether one thinks of art as a result of (1) active creation, or (2) of passive

expression. Although abstract argument between these points of view can amount to little more than a game where definitions play puss-in-the-corner, and which, when done, leaves all as it was before, still the history of architecture is best treated from the point of view which makes architectural development seem of most importance to human society, that is to say, the theory that art is a result of active creation. Historians deal not with various impulses, subsequent in development to one another in howsoany order, but with one creation which they must consider from distinct points of view, and under distinct subject-headings if they are to make clear history.

Mumford's presentation in his *Sticks and Stones* of the bewildering faults and latent virtues of our nation, as they are reflected in our buildings, left all students of society in his debt; but so intently did he observe the reflection, that the buildings as objects in themselves escaped him except as reflecting surfaces. The theory that art is the result of passive expression lead him to say untrue things about American architecture. In *The Brown Decades* he corrects many of his former untrue assertions, but makes as many more about mid-American painting. And when all is done, the forms of the eclectic architectural expressionism of Richardson, Sullivan and Wright, which he has set out to elucidate, remain obscure and unexplained. In their many details of history and criticism both books are valuable to students of the subject. But as the result in general is misleading, I record his mistakes in hard words with the hope that my record will be a guide to the perplexed.

The title page of *The Brown Decades* bears the dates 1865 to 1895, but the text deals with so much early work that the first date would seem to be a misprint for 1850. The title itself would actually describe years earlier than 1865. In a sort of Rebecca West *Orlando* passage, Mumford would have the color of America turn brown after the Civil War. But it began to do so in 1800, and by 1880 our predominantly blonde tonality was reasserted over our arts, and to some extent over life. Young painters no longer asked each other, "Where are you going to put your brown tree?" Baroc chiaroscuro went out of practise, and from the labors of Jarvis and Fenelosa, Italian primitives and oriental art came into fashion. In architecture, brownstone gave way, first to mosaics of brick or stone, and finally to gray and white. During these decades, people substituted golden oak for black walnut, used more and more white paint, agitated the smoke nuisance, opened up the house to draught and glare,

lightened draperies, stored furniture, went out of doors. They flocked to the country, the seashore and the suburbs. They turned their minds upon their present. These decades, under the leadership of their artists, were made blonde and colorful.

But Mumford makes his period dreary by judging it not by its leaders, but by the mob surrounding them, who were following their grandfathers' mis-steps. This is the best known way of falsifying history. The dreary title and all that depends upon it could be changed without affecting the book, except for the better. Brown is a poor color adjective anyway. Brown can designate any old color, — red, yellow, green or purple. As the author says at the end of the book, that brownstone itself is not brown, but porphyry or violet, I do not think that he is colorblind; but his treatment of Winslow Homer would make it charitable to say so. He says that there is no hint of the impressionist palette in LaFarge's youthful studies, but we have the artist's own word that his *Paradise Valley*, done under Hunt, gave impetus to the French school of the out-of-doors, which introduced to European landscape painting a hard "American" sparkle.

In negative generalities, truth most effectively evades historians. Often Mumford is carried away in negatives to say things he cannot mean, because they have no meaning. "There is no sense in which one can call the best of the painters of the brown decades colorists. Color was to be discovered in the 80's." Now the "brown" decades (1865 to 1895) include the 80's, and in Mumford's text, the 50's as well. Of the painters he neglects, Inness was a colorist, Homer and LaFarge were colorists; of his favorite painters, I would call Ryder a colorist; and if Fuller was not a colorist I don't know what he was as he grew progressively weak in form. Brown is a kind of color.

Mumford has not brought his discussion of mid-American painting to any such point of sociological conjecture as could be examined by the inferences from its logical consequences, but his many misrepresentations make up together a general, brown and vague democratic impression that Winslow Homer should have spent his life doing chromo-lithographs for Currier and Ives, that Eakins showed a "*little* talent and a *little* tenacity of purpose" and got by as a painter somehow by grace of a humanitarian urge, and that as Walt Whitman said, "Eakins is not a painter, he is a force," — a remark which somehow sounds like French heard over the radio.

Mumford's account of American painting will not do harm for very long, for soon he will revise it in another book and so rank as

our best historian of painting. I deal here with his treatment of painters only to prepare for his treatment of architects in his second book.

Here likewise in his discussions of our architecture, does he resemble a traveller to London who would visit a public collection of pictures with divided mind and distracted interest, torn between the precious colored surfaces and the reflections on the protecting glass which covered them, of other visitors to the gallery.

Among those present is Mr. Henry-Russell Hitchcock, who has said that 19th-century architecture is better judged by renderings and engravings than by buildings. As though against him, Mumford quotes H. H. Richardson: "Architecture cannot be fully judged except in concrete shape and color amid actual lights and shadows in its own particular surroundings." But like Hitchcock, Mumford looks through a lens of words instead of eye-glasses; words torn from the dictionary without their definitions. The adjective "eclectic" can most properly be used for Richardson, Sullivan and Wright, to characterize our first expressionistic manner in architectural style. But Mumford and Hitchcock use this adjective for such architects as McKim and Cram who took the eclectic's place in popular esteem, but who should be described not as eclectic but as archeological. I cannot elucidate Hitchcock's use of words, but I think that Mumford misuses these two adjectives, simply because "eclectic" has an uglier sound than "archeological" and because the archeological manners are the darlings of eastern financiers. The term archeological would do him quite as well. It is preplexing that this believer in expressionistic art, who believes it worth our while for him to study our artistic history, should prejudice our minds against the term "eclectic"; the study of our past architecture, if it is not to be purely archeological must be put to an eclectic use for an architecture which will draw upon all our naturalized styles and our native industrial style for its own metaphorical invention.

Such, I am sure, is Mumford's desire for the future American architecture. His work all points to this end. It is for this, therefore, and for his interest in everything where sociology and architecture meet that I call him our best historian of architecture. But because I consider the study of solutions rather than the requirements of problems, to be the essential subject matter of architecture, I think him a most misleading critic. He says that the Victorian industrial builders had no "particular concern with beauty." I consider that

if one set out to distinguish the conscious from the unconscious creation of beauty, one sets out on the wrong foot. Nobody knows anything about such mysteries. Nobody need know; "By their fruits ye shall know them." If anything is beautiful one may be sure that it is not so by accident. The basis for aesthetics is morphology.

Mumford says, "when the Civil War ended, American architecture had been sinking steadily for a generation," and to back up this statement, would accuse Walter and Mills of having "forgotten how to use stone or brick with any confidence or adroitness." This condemnation of all our architects and builders between 1830 and 1870 casts a suspicion upon this defender of Richardson, Sullivan and Wright, as against such enemies of theirs as Fisk Kimball, of being even more than Kimball a Colonial Revival boy. Mumford has made no such acute study of form as Kimball made in his *Domestic Architecture of the American Colonies and Early Republic.* Passages from Kimball's *American Architecture* correct and supplement Mumford's general studies.

Mumford's exposition of Victorian eclectic expressionism, valuable in many details, is as a whole a failure. I could not phrase a sentence to be more misleading than that in which he says that the Victorians "confined gothic architecture to churches and schools and turned over industrial building to engineers and contractors." So far was Victorian Gothic confined to churches and schools that it seemed at one time to dominate the century. So far did the Victorian Gothic evade the problems of the machine that it may be said to have been a chief instrument toward its humanization. This is difficult to think out. But it can be made clear. Neo-Gothic functionalism was concerned with expression of material, and is one origin for the functional expressionism in which Mumford deals; another being the Beaux Arts Baroc theory of functional plan, of which he says nothing. Mumford says that Sullivan's transportation building "departed from precedent in its golden portal." The precedent is plainly Saracenesque, which with Chinoiserie, was a third contributor to eclectic expressionism. Professor Ware reconciled the theories; Richardson reconciled the practises; Sullivan developed a reconciled practise and theory; Wright succeeded Sullivan with full-blown expressionism.

In *Sticks and Stones* Richardson is accused of being an exotic because (1) while the mob used wood in a makeshift way, he had his walls built of enormous stones which should withstand the test of

time, and because (2) he based his forms upon those used in the mediaeval past which Americans share in common with Europeans. To my mind his studies in Europe made him see his own country the better for having left it for awhile, and I am sure that if Mumford looked at our early industrial buildings: those of Bucklin around Providence, the Baltimore and Ohio viaducts, High Bridge or the Croton Water-works (which last he praises) he would see where Richardson got his megalithic style. Richardson is not called an exotic in *The Brown Decades*, but nothing is said there to explain how his buildings could have appeared upon our shores. When Mumford attempts such an explanation he calls Richardson the "first architect of distinction in America, who was ready to face the totality of modern life." He is forgetting Latrobe, the distinguished architect of the Capitol in Washington whose long practise was to a large extent industrial.

Anybody who studies 19th-century architecture need not study very hard to see that the industrial is from the start its most important aspect, and nowhere more important than in America. Mumford's treatment of the industrial is most incomplete. A complete treatment would be a life-work, but there is enough general information to be had on the subject for a critic to arrive at some elucidating conjecture. Mumford's attempt to do so is to say that our time and his decades have a like "faith in the machine age." This and nothing more. He brings out the point that the traditional American frame house is based on an exactly comparable method to the Chicago construction, and he wisely points out that while the skyscraper is the most sensational use of steel, the material is suited to vastly better things. His treatment of early Chicago skyscrapers should be supplemented by the more extensive information supplied by Talmadge in his *Story of American Architecture*. He gives a good account of Brooklyn Bridge, but he dismisses the World's Fair in Philadelphia in 1876, without considering its mechanism; he makes no mention of Vaux's project for the Fair, nor of the contemporary Philadelphia Academy by Furness, Sullivan's old boss. The most valuable observations upon the industrial style are still those by Fergusson on the London Crystal Palace, 1853. This mid-Victorian critic had an interest in sociology but his criticisms are technical.

Architecture has a firmer technique than politics. Its criticism, therefore, can be made more pointed with a greater ease than the criticism of society. Veblen wrote a social criticism which is sus-

ceptible to aesthetic interpretation. But Mumford's superficial sociology, though presented as spiritual aesthetics, is a very different thing from an aesthetic which would bear up under social interpretation and is moreover, technically inaccurate. The real facts about the skyscraper which he attributes to Joseph M. Wells are such as to make his "discovery" of it read like a hoax.

Mumford, instead of blaming Sullivan for not providing one of his buildings with panel space for billboards, a social requirement for a modern architect, blames the advertisers for sticking the building over with signs. One could defend a large part of architectural malpractise in this way. One could blame the public for not wanting to live in artificial ruins. To judge society by architecture, and architecture by society is to involve oneself in a maze of paradox. His comparison of the elder Olmstead's landscape gardening with the best landscape design of the Italian Renaissance is, for one who has lived in Rome and Florence as well as in Boston, only a little short of blasphemy.

Mumford's books are valuable to students of American culture. A nation which has had so short a history as ours must suffer if it cut off any period of its past from intelligent sympathy. As half of our architectural 19th century has been taken from us by critics, critics must give it back. But this historian of American architecture has not sought, as Sullivan's mathematics teacher sought, demonstrations so broad as to admit of no exceptions. "What you don't know won't hurt you. It's what you do know that ain't so."

JOHN WHEELWRIGHT

MAGAZINE REVIEWS

"LONELY HEARTS COLUMN"

FRONT. *Trilingual quarterly. Editors: Sonja Prins, Norman MacLeod, Xavier Abril, &c. Den Haag, Holland.*

THE LEFT. *A Quarterly Review of Radical and Experimental Art. Editors: George Redfield, Jay du Von. Davenport, Iowa.*

HESPERIAN. *'Issued occasionally'. Editor: James D. Hart. San Francisco, California.*

NATIVITY. *Quarterly. Editors: Boris J. Israel, Norman MacLeod, &c. Delaware, Ohio.*

PAGANY. *Quarterly. Editor: Richard Johns. New York.*

PROCESSION. *Quarterly. Editors: Derek Fox, Peter Ruthven, &c. Ann Arbor, Michigan.*

THE NEW REVIEW. *Bi-monthly. Editor: Samuel Putnam. Paris.*

Front and *The Left* represent the sociological Left Wing. Of the former, four numbers have appeared, with work in French, English, and German. Of the latter, only one number has been published; a second is long overdue. Both magazines are animated by an uncompromising sincerity; both are vitiated by an inability to achieve a balance between art and propaganda. In the opening article of *Left*, V F Calverton worries out a platitude to unnecessary length,

concluding that 'the revolutionary critic does not aim to underestimate literary craftsmanship. What he contends is simply that literary craftsmanship is not enough. The craftsmanship must be utilized to create objects of revolutionary meaning. . . . In a word, the revolutionary critic does not believe that we can have art without craftsmanship; what he does believe is that, granted the craftsmanship, our aim should be to make art serve man as a thing of action and not man serve art as a thing of escape'. I do not know what Mr Calverton means by 'objects of revolutionary meaning'; and I feel that a bit more prose craftsmanship would have avoided the hocuspocus of that final cadence; but the simple conflict is there, 'in a word'. What is the duty of an artist who must also propagandize? Can a poem be a sociological tract? Given a propagandist who happens also to be a true poet; given documentary phenomena as material for a poem: is the artist to bend, arrange his material to suit his poetic theory, or is he to suppress his poetic theory better to serve the ends of his propaganda? I believe that Norman MacLeod, for instance, is one of the few thorough artists writing to-day. If certain of his poems are not the final expression of the Southwest, of industrial tragedy, of the proletarian consciousness, these things will never be said. Yet, consider this passage, from a long poem in *Nativity:*

> The barren land.
> Rigs like penitent crosses black against the pale New Mexican dawns.
> Let a stronger, brawnier poet come from the heart of a people
> singing the war against mankind
> before the song can die in his throat
> fearful of capitalism.

Here it is in a nutshell. The first two verses, evoking the mesas and the crag-based crosses of the *Penitentes*, are legitimate, although too imprecise to partake of MacLeod's best vein. Thereafter the 'social note' breaks through,[1] first in a verse of commonplace Whitman, then quickly degenerating into a series of prosaic clichés, to end with that ghastly (from an artistic point of view) 'fearful of capitalism' — for all the world like a limping adonic at the end of a bad Sapphic. The synthesis of medium and direction is unaccomplished; the poet is lost in the pamphleteer. Now MacLeod, like

[1] I would not suggest that the 'social note' be excluded; indeed, it is the *creator spiritus* of this poem, as of MacLeod's best work. I mean simply that it should be subjected to an artistic discipline.

Robert McAlmon and Horace Gregory, is first of all a poet: which means that he is usually successful in the artistic assimilation of his material, and that the passage I have quoted above is no more than an illustrative lapse. But the lesser contributors to these magazines are not so fortunate. In most cases, they suggest no craftsmanship whatsoever. Their poems, like their stories, are no more than manifestoes very thinly disguised as 'creative literature'; and the disguises are worn without skill, — cast-offs, for the most part, of the extremists of *transition*. Nevertheless, typographical eccentricity and downright bad writing can not make a poem out of a social report, however much Vladimir Pillin ('O battalions! O disaster!' [1]) and Edward Dahlberg (why, in *Pagany* or anywhere else, must Mr Dahlberg rewrite the epigraphs to *Manhattan Transfer?*) may desire it. Briefly: for most of MacLeod's poems, for Dos Passos' *The Man who said his Name was Jones*, for *Left's* excellent movie-criticism (the best I have seen), for the stories and poems of Kay Boyle, Mangan, and Williams in *Front*, as well as for the intense sincerity of both magazines, *Front* and *The Left* are to be valued. For Calverton, verbosely trite; for Zukofsky, whose critical artillery seems to be composed exclusively of the *ipsius dicta*, apt or inept, of Mr Pound, and who contributes to *Front* IV a badly written review of *XXX Cantos*, adding nothing to his earlier (and badly written) french review in *Échanges* III; for the race-riot plays and the packing-house prose: — what need be said, except that the best fighting-steel is tempered?

In *Nativity*, which is more frankly a 'literary' quarterly, I can find little to recommend. A story by DeJong, inferior to his usual work; MacLeod's poem, from which I have quoted above. The rest is a sufficiently bad aping of the Paris Gang, rising to a transpaludian flight with a Miss Eva Pratt (hitherto unpublished), who drinks gin, speaks french, knows about Life, & concludes:

> It was a long winter, Spring came up the Connecticut
> in mid April, but we were a hard lot,
> we were a hard lot.

Of all these magazines, the oldest and most distinguished is *Pagany*. It has published some of the best stories (*e.g.:* Dos Passos, Erskine Caldwell, Mary Butts) of our time, and its occasional critical articles have been exceptionally good. A magazine that has brought out Dos Passos' *Eveline Hutchins* and Dr Williams' *White*

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[1] *O saisons! O châteaux!*

Mule (which, however unpleasantly, is solid merciless guts) has achieved an eminence that it must not relinquish. At the same time, the boys and girls *will* break in to turn parts of every number into a pseudo-Triana *baile de máscaras*. The current number is representative: here are Dos Passos' and Williams' stories; here are six poems by Cummings, who can still get away with crooning *if i love You;* three more *Cantos* by Mr Pound; a stylized savagery by Mangan; at least one original poem by Conrad Aiken; some real things by MacLeod. But here also are Mr Dahlberg, having a hell of a good time with the compositor; Basil Bunting, who once wrote a fine poem about Villon,[1] agreeing with F. P. A., in a distressing version of *Carm. I, Od. xiii*,[2] that Horace was the Roman equivalent of Walter Winchell; and Mina Loy, who is certainly experienced enough to know better. . . . And why is it necessary to continue (and, worse, to announce yet another instalment of) Mr Halper's parody of *Farewell to Arms*, — a parody which was amusing enough at first, but which tired soon, forgot it was a parody, and has now become weakly pathetic, and frequently even touching, *quâ* Hemingway? Yet one number of *Pagany* is worth volumes of the others. It is, of this collection, the single solid force.

The others . . . *Hesperian*, typographically pretentious to the point of unreadableness, suggests the vigour of the West Coast. There is an interesting colloquy by Diego Rivera, and, in the Winter issue, some extremely good translations, by Yvor Winters, of Corbière, du Bellay, Vielé-Griffin, and Mallarmé. The magazine is purely literary; acceptably amateur; generally unexciting. The same is true, in diminution, of *Procession*. There are some pretty album-verses by Yvor Winters, a long and informative discussion of Russian music, by Carl Gehring. Little more . . . *The New Review* is at least stimulating: Pound's penetrating illiteracies and Antheil's musical notes see to that. In the second number there's a grand sculpture of Mr Hoover, done in cast iron with bathtub-enamel finish. In the first number, Maxwell Bodenheim, 'leading american poet' (!), appears staggering under eight pages of huge prose on a modest subject: 'Esthetics, Criticism, and Life.' Had Doctor Johnson composed the *Hisperica Famina*, he might have written so: 'Chaos is a massive struggle for birth, each separate

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[1] In *Redimiculum Matellarum* (Milan, 1930); *R.M.* may perhaps be interpreted, *A Garland of Chamberpots*. It's an unerring sense, &c &c. . . .

[2] *Cum tu, Lydia, Telephi*, &c. It becomes 'Please stop gushing about his pink neck, smooth arms and so forth, Dulcie: it makes me sick', *k:t:l.*

part of which is too antagonistic to the other part to permit the release of broader and distinct units within this birth, whereas the disorders of esthetics are infinitely friendly toward each other and employ myriads of means to develop, circumvent, and surpass myriads of contrasts, extensions.' And so on, without even a paragraph-break, to the end. If Mr Pound's prose sounds as though its author were trotting in his nightshirt through a cobbly street, prodding an ancient typewriter suspended upon his bosom; if Mr Dahlberg's prose seems to be waging a lost battle with a calliope; if Mr Zukofsky's prose is stylistically reminiscent of the tabloids' *Vox Populi* columns: what shall be said of this marmoreal diction, except that, in Ovid's careful phrase, *ad metam properavit simul*? Mr Bodenheim's extended detumescence wears itself out finally in the third number — a number which opens with a lulu by Michel Arnaud, *Onan or Love is Born Perfect* *, and closes with an essay aptly entitled *Fungus, Twilight, or Dry Rot*, by Mr Pound. 'Remains aht and licherchoor'; 'Very possibly true but is no excuse for reprinting the god damn book [i.e., *The Golden Treasury*, with the jury's comments] in a popular edtn. Some corpses shd. be allowed to stay buried. For real cloacal obsessions apply to the Bri'sh critics. One has just done a book about (guess who)'; 'Incitement to . . . such disorder outside a given state is just as criminal as breeches [*olé!*] of peace inside the state . . .'; 'Alfonso of Spain appears to have been the typical king, a grafter. Like the french Bourbons before him'; — it is increasingly difficult to understand Mr Pound's conviction that English is an unfit vehicle for criticism. The same number contains an agreeable essay by Miguel de Unamuno, and an excellent story by Wambly Bald. Otherwise, there's little of any value, and much that is definitely bad. After an encouraging start, *The New Review* seems to have cast in its lot with such organs of high-school radicalism as *This Quarter:* professionally 'modernist', it is apparently content to keep the usual battered signals floating in the backwash of *après-la-guerre*, and it will probably stimulate the advance-guard element in New-Britain (Conn.).

. . . One summer, years ago, I was so fortunate as to share rooms with a gentleman who conducted the Lonely Hearts Column for the now alas defunct *Boston Telegram*. As a sideline he ran Advice to the Love-lorn; and whenever there was a paucity of queries, he'd take another drink and write them himself. It used to worry

* "Author's Note: — I have not wanted to publish *Onan*, for the reason that this work no longer means anything to me. &c &c" *Quisque sui criticus . . . justissimus.*

him: he was always afraid that some day he would cease to be, let us say, Francis X McGinsburg, and would wake up as an anxious multiplicity of Maybelles, Eighteen-Year-Olds, Doubtfuls, and Alysses. Perhaps it has happened, though with a slight change. I detect a familiar tone: perhaps (is it possible?) he has become a multiplicity of Lesser Contributors, and as such is appearing once in a while in *Pagany* and the established reviews; rather oftener in the Left Wing; and is supplying the mad little magazines with almost their entire content. Sometimes he hits it off; more often he is lonely for the dead dear days when a pied line was Art because it was pied, when outraged syntax was Art because it was outraged, when everybody gathered in Sam Schwartz' place, or in Joy street, and had the fastest time: because all the old Values were bumped sky-high, and Lonely Hearts could meet and mingle and be strident and oh very consciously Modern. . . .

DUDLEY FITTS

THE CRITERION

Edited by T. S. ELIOT

IN the seven years of its existence as a review of literature THE CRITERION has published work by the most distinguished authors of every country and every generation. Among the contributors are found such names as George Saintsbury, Charles Whibley, J. M. Robertson, G. K. Chesterton, W. B. Yeats, Virginia Woolf, Clive Bell, E. M. Forster, Aldous Huxley, Ezra Pound, Wyndham Lewis, James Joyce, May Sinclair. It was the first review in England to publish Marcel Proust, Paul Valery, Jacques Maritain, Charles Maurras, Max Scheler, Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Jean Cocteau, and other foreign writers. The files of THE CRITERION constitute the most nearly complete record in existence of the intellectual life of Europe during these seven years. THE CRITERION is necessary to anyone who wishes to follow that intellectual and artistic life in the present and future.

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MES JOYCE'S EXILES AND IBSEN by FRANCIS FERGUSS
E PROBLEM OF CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY by ETIENNE GILS
OM A RUSSIAN DIARY by EDWARD ESTLIN CUMMIN
TERNATIONAL ARCHITECTURAL STYLE, a chronicle by HAROLD STERI
ORIES by HAZEL HAWTHORNE, JON CHEEVER, DAVID DEJO
EMS by T. H. FERRILL, R. P. BLACKMUR, SELDEN RODMAN, L. W. HUBB

PHOTOGRAPHS

PRIL-JUNE 1932

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EXILES AND IBSEN'S WORK

IN *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* we read of Stephen that "as he went by Baird's stonecutting works in Talbot Place the spirit of Ibsen would blow through him like a keen wind, a spirit of wayward boyish beauty." This spirit blows through *Exiles* with a super-Ibsen keenness over a colder-than-Ibsen structure of cut stone. Professor Rubek, in *When We Dead Awaken*, asks Irene with weariness and bewilderment, "Do you remember what you answered when I asked if you would go with me out into the wide world?"

Irene

I held up three fingers in the air and swore that I would go with you to the world's end and to the end of life. And that I would serve you in all things —

Professor Rubek

As the model for my art —

Irene

— In frank, utter nakedness —

But there is no such bewilderment in *Exiles*, and in the last scene Richard can tell Bertha, "It is not in the darkness of

belief that I desire you. But in restless, wounded, living doubt. To hold you by no bonds, even in love, to be united with you in body and soul in utter nakedness — for this I longed." It is like the analogy between Stephen Dedalus on one side, a bird-man, unique, soaring straight toward the Sun, and on the other, Brand with his gloomy aspiration, and Peer Gynt with his irresponsible histrionics. In each case we gulp, we gape, we are astounded as though by a superb stunt. This "stunt," both in *Exiles* and in the Ibsen plays, is a feat of the author's mind, a presentation of new and startling simplifications. All drama depends on some sort of simplification. But Sophocles and Shakespeare offer us theirs as distillments of common, traditional human wisdom, and though their insights may be ever new, the newness, and the author's discovery of it, is never the point. In Ibsen and *Exiles* the newness *is* the point, and in *Exiles* the point is the finality also.

The difficulty with the genre of modern drama is that the characters are obliged to debate their rights and wrongs more self-consciously than is either credible or dramatic. They analyze their motives and their feelings for each other with an omniscience which should be left to the author and the audience, for the reason that such understanding is not dramatic, only the effort to understand is dramatic. Yet if a modern character does not understand himself from the first, how is a modern audience to follow? Antony or Antigone, when they stepped on their stages, could be sure of being accepted as having *some* significance, but Hedda Gabler is obliged to expound her own psychology, and Dr. Relling of *The Wild Duck* to explain the symbolism of the play like a rather shamefaced little Ibsen on the lecture-platform. Mr. Joyce, faced with this problem, manages differently. His characters all come clear in the mere presence of the compelling and inquisitorial Richard. He makes their halting apologias more credible, as he makes them more complete, once you grant him Richard, in the light of whose mind and

under the influence of whose strenuous ethic everything is presented.

"If the spirit is a lamp within us, glowing through what the world and the flesh make of us as through a ground-glass shade, then [Ibsen's people] are lamps burning, as in tasteless parlors, with the lamps practically exposed," said Henry James. He was thinking partly of that ardent explicitness of theirs, partly of the provincial society in which they moved, which offered not a shred of manners to clothe their scruples in, and partly of their story, which was characteristically that of a strong individual's struggle to defend his soul from that same surrounding bare provinciality. This description fits *Exiles* in many ways. The provincial setting is similar, and the story (insofar as there is a story) is about a similar struggle. And the characters meet, if at all, on the basis of the barest facts of the inescapable human relations, those of parent to child and of man to woman. There is the lamp of the spirit with a vengeance, but with its flame not "practically exposed," but as near to "utterly naked" as Rowan-Joyce can make it. Richard Rowan will not have it that the world and the flesh can make him a whit different from what he chooses to be. And the mind of this Rowan-Joyce being is far less provincial than James's own.

This is as much as to say that *Exiles* is by no means to be thought of as an Ibsen type of play in the sense in which Strindberg's, for instance, or Andreyev's or some of O'Neill's plays belong in that category. These writers have run the Ibsen prophetic or didactic tradition up several blind alleys, where it is expiring loudly but without vision, force or dignity. Ibsen had no Ibsen to study; and his followers, taking the direction he marked out, have failed to profit by his example. But the author of *Exiles* has precisely profited by Ibsen's example, taking what he needed of Ibsen's technique to state once and for all what is inescapable in Ibsen's story or theme. He finishes off the modern intellectual drama, the

drama of "individualism," the drama which attempts to dispense with tradition. Yet at the same time he attains a static perfection of vision which carries him quite beyond that genre, and even amounts to destroying it. This may be shown in a number of ways.

Take, for instance, the perfection of Mr. Joyce's portraits in *Exiles*. Ibsen and his characters, however faithless they may be, and however set on maintaining their freedom and integrity of soul, acknowledge that there is something which is true of them and of others also. In *The Wild Duck* they are pursuing that Germanic notion the Life Illusion. Ibsen's preliminary sketches for his plays show that he would get the idea of the action first, and work out his portraits later. He writes, after working for some months on *The Wild Duck*, that he is about to begin "the more energetic individualization" of his people and of "their modes of expression." For him an idea for a play was an idea for a single action, which, of course, depends on having all the characters oriented with reference to some common, even if unrealized object of desire, or good. In consequence of the nature of this object, which Ibsen was always changing his mind about, the autonomy of his characters often suffers. The action illustrates a thesis, which is Ibsen's own current notion about ultimate questions; and the people are fragments of Ibsen, created out of his sympathy and fed with his life. Lacking a traditional theme like those of the Greeks or Elizabethans, Ibsen's actions remain like umbilical cords which he could never cut. But Mr. Joyce substitutes for action a motionless picture, and for a thesis a metaphysical vision of a kind of godless monadology or Pluralistic Universe, of a consistency and strictness which William James the liberal never dreamed of. So it serves the consistency of his vision to bring out all the qualities of his people which make them what they are "and not another thing"; which distinguish them, above all, from Rowan-Joyce. Ibsen was interested in what people

do, and in the effort to show their actions as significant sometimes seems to do violence to what they *are*. If Mr. Joyce falsifies his people, it is in the opposite way. However much he may sympathize with them, he *sees* them, much more than he invents them out of his own inner life — sees them as hopeless, "looks and passes," like Dante touring Hell; and cuts them off, with the most sober and delicate exactitude, in their actual frivolity and darkness.

An analysis of this kind might be pursued indefinitely, as though along a thousand centripetal spirals leading ever more subtly up to the unity of the work. It leads beyond the play *as play*, as soon as we see that there is no action here as other dramas have taught us to understand action. A hasty reading of the play might lead one to believe that the action was Robert's unsuccessful attempt to seduce Richard's wife. Another reading will show that this is only part of a larger whole. The first scene of the play, a conversation between Richard and Beatrice, which takes up so much of the first act, is almost complete in itself, and is not scenically part of the development of Robert's attempted seduction. It is connected with it through Bertha's jealousy of Beatrice, but we do not discover this until it is too late for it to help our understanding of the action as it would unroll on the stage. But the *portrait* of Beatrice is very strictly part of Mr. Joyce's group picture, with its symmetrical and balanced contrasts, its compared incommensurables. One might try to see the action as Richard's attempt to survive in Ireland, but the more deeply we study him the less does this seem to be what he is attempting. His effort is to remain himself, and he does so, agonized but unchanging, from beginning to end. In the last speech of the play, a speech of extreme beauty, wherein a Joycean character comes very near the Ibsen trick of speaking with the author's voice, Bertha places Rowan-Joyce himself among the exiles: "Forget me, Dick," she says. "Forget me and love me again as you did the first time."

Which we see — if we remember that all is shown in the light of Richard's mind — as making the exile-vision absolute, removing it from the relativity or meaningfulness of action. For action is the *lingua franca* on which drama as an art among other arts depends; it is the common guide-line for actors and audience, and it gives the meaning of the play in terms of something outside itself. It is meaning in this sense which Mr. Joyce has been at great pains to eliminate.

Exiles is thus a "drama to end dramas." And it invokes to this end the authority of life "caught in the fact" — an ultimate fact, we are supposed to feel, not the mere real circumstances, which is what Henry James had in mind when he applied this phrase to Ibsen. "The esthetic image in the dramatic form is life purified in and reprojected from the human imagination," Stephen Dedalus tells us, without even mentioning action. What he means by the esthetic image is explained in the much-quoted definition from Aquinas: "Three things are needed for beauty, wholeness, harmony and radiance." In these terms we are obliged to understand the wholeness of *Exiles* as the exile-vision itself, the godless monadology, and its "harmony" as that consistent complexity in which we are even now involved. As for the radiance, Stephen interprets it thus: "The connotation of the word is rather vague — It would lead you to believe that he had in mind symbolism or idealism, the supreme quality of beauty being a light from some other world, the idea of which the matter was but the shadow, the reality of which it was but the symbol — But that is literary talk — The radiance of which he speaks is the scholastic *quidditas* or whatness of a thing. This supreme quality is felt by the artist when the esthetic image is first conceived in his imagination." We see some of the implications of this distinction when we remember the words of Aristotle: "When its object is the what, in the sense of the quiddity, and there is no predication, thought is in every sense true." Mr. Joyce has been concerned to save

the truth and authority of his image by removing every trace of radiance as symbolism, which amounts to predication, to meaning in relation to other images, whereby *Exiles* would take its place, as a play, not a metaphysical vision, in due relation to other images. Hence that unique glare, as of a spot of brilliant light in surrounding blackness, before which we are supposed to come to rest "in the silent stasis of esthetic pleasure."

If the authority of the exile-vision stops you "cold," you must come to rest indeed — like Beatrice, perhaps, "with pride and scorn in your heart," but like her caught in the fascination of what it claims as intelligibility in terms of itself. If not, you must explain it in terms of Rowan-Joyce as a human being. Nowhere outside *Exiles* will you find human isolation so finely rendered — that obstinate incommensurability of human longings which seems to be the cold little wisdom special to our time — both in its bracing fear and exaltation, and in its pity. Yet even while you mourn and thrill you may begin to feel, as in Ibsen, that the case is too special to be satisfying, and the simplification, however brilliant, somehow arbitrary. This is my experience. The "silent stasis of esthetic pleasure" gives place, for me, at a certain point, to an obsessive circling of the mind around a fixed, compelling thought, which is the Stephen-Rowan-Joyce thought of himself. It is this being which is both the shadow and the idea of *Exiles*, if we ask it to have a meaning, and it is this being we must question. This may only be done with the help of Mr. Joyce's other works.

The Joycean cycle will doubtless not be understandable till long after it is completed. But it may already help us to make the Richard-Stephen character conceivable. Surely the barren askesis of his life, as we are shown it in *Exiles*, is intolerable? — But *Exiles* shows us only the ethical side of that character, and only a moment in his relation to the other personages. Richard is evidently the continuation of Stephen;

Robert seems to be another incarnation of Mulligan. Richard is also in some ways intermediate between the Stephen and the Bloom of *Ulysses*. Most important of all, the other works, which are more directly concerned with his consciousness, show us the perceptions he lives by and for fragments of beauty which are for him equivalents neither of the Dantesque *Esser beato nell' atto che vede* nor of Aristotelian contemplation.

With the aid of the larger Joycean testimony, too, we can get a more exact conception of the relation between *Exiles* and Ibsen. Both Ibsen and Stephen-Richard Joyce are rebels, but they are rebelling against very different things, and their rebellions differ greatly in consequences. Ibsen could write, "I believe there is nothing else and nothing better for us all to do than in spirit and truth to realize ourselves," which sounds, as sheer rebellion, Joycean. But he was rebelling against the decayed Norwegian Protestantism, and turning its own weapons against it: "You surely will not blame me," he had said many years before, "because *Brand* may have given pietism something to lean on. You might just as well reproach Luther with having introduced Philistinism into the world; it was certainly not his intention to do so, and he must therefore be held blameless." His rebellion was comparatively futile, because he was rebelling against a lack. Or you may put it that he did not believe in what he was rebelling against, and so ends, where he began, in the void. But Stephen-Richard is revolting against the tremendously solid structure of scholastic theology. If Robert or Beatrice or Bertha touch him now and again it is because they unconsciously illustrate the vitality of some side of the belief he is denying; if he touches them, it is with one of the weapons of that system which he permits himself to use, and if the spirit of his dead mother is still terrible to him it is because she appears with the Church behind her. Ibsen's revolt may seem to us, in Ibsen's own light and in the light of the Joy-

cean summa of rebellion, futile; but we can understand it and sympathize with it because the lack which was its occasion was inescapable for him and for many of us also. Stephen-Richard's revolt appears in comparison unique, gratuitous, almost perverse, because he believes in its object to the extent of feeling that he risks damnation in refusing it his submission. Why, we are bound to wonder in our poverty, does he so unequivocally reject Catholicism, when he uses something very like its own prayer and confession in his personal discipline, and its own wisdom in sharpening the eye of his mind? — But his early education under the Jesuits gave him the key to the riches of Catholic theology almost before he was aware of needing them. And then by revolting against it he brings it to life and to light as many a pious exegete "in the darkness of belief" fails to do. Only a man who was a believer in all but the most fundamental sense could risk everything on a doctrine which he can see as a heresy (perhaps the doctrine that his pride is the essence of that soul which he is above all things concerned to preserve, instead of its deepest blemish). The work of Ibsen may speak to our need for a faith even if it leads nowhere, but *Exiles*, rightly understood, appeals only to the eye of the mind. It is a point in the heroic but necessarily unique living out of a "heresy"; it is like a new geometry, based on the denial of a Euclidean axiom, and worked out, to the enrichment of mathematics, in accordance with mathematical laws.

Meanwhile there remains one's delight in *Exiles* as the most terrible and beautiful of modern plays. This delight, like one's admiration for the Joycean sanity and common sense, is the mark of a certain stage in the understanding of it; but in the same way it has its truth, it is there to return to, and it is to be preserved with the utmost care as a part of the experience of Mr. Joyce's work which consents to take its place alongside other experiences.

FRANCIS FERGUSSON

TWO POEMS

ELLESMERE ISLAND

THIS is Thule, this is land's end.
The polar bears walk ponderously on the frozen straits.
Seals bark on the ice floes.
The black ice blinds us.

We have come to the cave of the winds.
We have felt the pulse of the winds with delicate instruments.
We have laid our ears to the great heart of the winds,
Timing the savage valves.

Spring in this country is a red lip kissing the horizon at noon,
And autumn a red mouth kissing good bye to the polar bears
and their cubs,
And the baby seals with brown puppydog eyes,
Saying, Good night and good luck, I shall be gone a long time.

THE CATS

I SAW a thousand cats marching into the west,
Softly on padded paws, making no sound.
The green eyes, like marsh fires, were fixed
Upon the distance, the smooth backs rippled, the tails
Were proud and erect as banners.

Surely, Lord, I said, in all the world
You have made nothing so beautiful as these cats
Marching into the deep west, where the heroes have gone.

LINDLEY WILLIAMS HUBBELL

ON THE BALTIC

THE beginning of it would be when she was a simpler woman and the baby was born, it had cried and been given a name.

The beginning of it would be when

in the hospital she lay over on her back, her body lay, after its most ultimate use, her body something different, soft and alive, different from the rigid danger that came glancing off the instruments, the enamel, out of the crisis of the sharp and high white lights.

And she would sit all night thinking how to make it as real again, all night, in the room of the house on the Baltic, With the houses dark, before the moon, and the fallen leaves lying like wet rags on the ground of the garden, a mist covering the sea, and on the leaves of the bushes and trees moisture gathering, but the drops not quite heavy enough to fall.

There had been days of vibration preceding this intense memory, ending in her going to the bookcase and pulling at the books until they were unbalanced and tumbled on her in rows. She did this because they were excitants, and they were like people with caustic viewpoints let into a house she had meant to keep simple as water. And also at the end of the two days she said Jesus Christ, wouldn't something that had happened ever stop happening? Because now the birthday was coming, this time the tenth. Other people not disappointed women had something happen to them, and they thought

about it maybe, but as a flat keepsake they had in their hands; whereas her own kind, she knew savagely, had to let the thing go through them and through them with an awful mobility. And this was breaking in her now, with sharp edges and a great deal of weight.

She sat alone in the small room. Anna Lisa knocked, turned the black handle of the white door and came in with a pitcher of chocolate in her hand. The pitcher was branched and flowered with steam. She opened the door of the porcelain chimney and hid the pitcher in the fleshlike warmth inside. Then she lifted her small plump hands to the curtains and drew them across the dark window panes. She was demure, domestic and empty, like a china bowl. Matilda watched, returned now into the empty instant.

— You need not pick up the books. I am changing their order, she said to the girl. Very likely the girl's ears were rosy with whispers, and her lips eager to repeat somewhere what she knew of today — precisely that her mistress was a woman away from her children.

— Anna Lisa, said Matilda suddenly. I'll have my *Abendbrot* now. Fetch some white wine from the café. I'm going to celebrate my daughter's birthday.

Anna Lisa flushed with interest. They were bound to each other because they shared the intimate body of the house.

— *Jawohl*, she said. And how old is the little one?

— This is the tenth birthday.

Anna Lisa went out. The violent orange silk of the lampshade was covered with black dots from flies. In the stove a briquet suddenly gently shattered. Matilda took the pitcher from the oven and poured a cupful of chocolate. Going back to the lounge behind the table she saw herself in the long mirror between the windows, an uncontrollably shapeless image moving across the room, wrinkling its hot tired eyes into the mirror, pitting itself against the density of the night and against memory

she sensed that they were praising her, and sloping down from the pain she wished quickly and brightly to understand them, and be no longer isolated from them.

— What does *tapfer* mean? she asked the doctor, whose hands were engaged at the foot of the table.

— Brave, he translated, his courtesy twinkling. The nurses kept glancing at the two of them, eager to hear her speak English, in which they had such a live interest. They were splashing water into basins, chattering over the infant as they weighed it, moving in quicksilver routines. They did not question her desire to bear children, the Germans; they were not ironic, or asking her to give reasons, as did her own friends.

— Dr. von der Porten, she said. I didn't mind the pain, so you must not say *tapfer*. But I am proud because, did you notice, I spoke in German all the way through?

— I heard you, the *Hebamme* exclaimed, her words coming well-shaped and loud through her lips. You told us the timing of your pains, and you yourself excused for biting the hand of Schwester Ilsa.

Matilda turned, but only her head, toward the blond nurse who was washing instruments. *Ach! Es thut mir leid.* And in her fragmentary German added, *Schmerz?*

— *Macht nichts, macht nichts,* answered Schwester Ilsa, flushing.

Suddenly a disturbance came, drew Matilda's attention back to herself. She felt another deep rhythmical pain; her muscles were gathering into the irresistible contraction. There was a wild urge to turn upon her side, struggle again. Then the sensation passed. But the *Hebamme* and the doctor were both looking at her, speaking hastily in low tones together, bending over her abdomen. The nurses gathered, too, eyeing her strangely, bowing their heads. Confusion spread about the room, and all of Matilda's body and mind wrenched together with a foreknowledge of what they were going to tell her.

— How do you say it in English? they whispered to one another. Then the face of the *Hebamme*, kind and chaste, leaned close above hers. You are going to have *Zwillinge!* she explained, while all the others listened, their hands suspended now from their tasks. Do you know what that means?

Matilda turned upon her side with a gasp, and clawed at the sheets.

— By the pain I know! Oh, what shall I do? I haven't strength enough left. *Gott, o Gott, wie komisch!* Then she drove all her breath down into the back of her throat, whence it issued again in frantic gurgles. Once more, oh God, once more the passion was laid upon her to bear, bear, *bear.*

After a half hour of almost constant effort, during which the doctor and nurses pressed against her and held her legs, the great releasing moment came, stretching and burning her bowels; her eyes were closed, hands imploring, she was black in the face, given up to an intolerable ecstacy. From her body slipped the infant, and the doctor said immediately, This time you have the boy you so much wished.

Gently she rested. The baby kicked against her with the same quick blows he had dealt against her sides before his birth. She laughed, and again she cried out, *Gott, o Gott — wie komisch!* How glad, how glad I am. This one's name shall be Peter, because he was born in Germany. Tell me, is he Tall and Dark and Handsome?

She lifted her head, and in that instant knew it was no use. They did not respond to her triumphant babbling, they were silent, bending over the baby.

Sharply she summoned them. What is it? What is it? The doctor turned to her. I am sorry. A little blood from the nose — it may mean a brain lesion. We will try, but you had better not expect — . He stopped. He was really sorry.

The *Hebamme* carried the child's form from the room. He had not cried or breathed.

All that night, as Matilda lay wincing under the recurrent after pains, drugged, and weighted with a sand-bag, she thought the boy was near, flying in the air. She knew he was dead, but nevertheless she knew he was beating his little wings in the dark air of the hospital wards. He wished to stay near her for awhile longer. And she was not surprised at his death, and accepted it calmly. It was as if, unreleased into life, she could always be carrying him in her body, in her rapture of protection, as if she could be pregnant with him always.

She became enthralled with the luxury of cleanliness. The room had blue plastered walls, with dark linoleum on the floor, and tall windows. She was encased in the room. She pressed her fingers delicately into the shawl on her shoulders, and rubbed her cheeks lightly against its furls. It covered her ragged nightgown, which she would have been ashamed for her visitors to see, lest they immediately and kindly present her with new gowns.

Her baby Sally was often brought to her, and she regarded its red face with pleasure. She absorbed with the utmost secretive happiness the light which entered through the windows and polished her drinking glass on the shelf above the enamel bowl.

On the third day a nurse and one of her German friends, a practical and charitable woman, came to ask how she wished to dispose of the body of her child. They suggested a plot in the cemetery of Hamburg, but she refused this. She was very cool about it, for she had no money. They also suggested that the body be given to the students of the hospital for their studies, and she signed the papers to that end. The three women showed no emotion.

Sometimes her doctor came. He wore striped grey trousers and spats, and held his gloves and hat in one hand as he bowed. *Gnädige Frau.* He showed her how to record the baby's weight in German measures.

An American girl also came. She was thin, pretty, and nervous. She cried because she was so tired of the Consulate office where she worked. The trouble seemed unimportant and far. Matilda looked at her own white fingers on the cold impeccable sheet, and hygiene seemed to her the most beautiful accomplishment in the world. Her baby smelled of flannel and powder, and beyond that she would not think.

When she went back with the baby to the house on the Baltic, she found that the mud, the fowls perching in the hedges, the barnyard stenches were abhorrent. She had to stretch the shawl above the baby's head in a tent, to protect it from the flies.

Her other children circled about the baby and sang a song to it, in their thin, clear, loving voices. They sang:

> Little Sally Water, sitting in a saucer,
> Crying and weeping for someone to come; . . .

The baby was awake in the curve of her arm, its abstract glances resting on the children now and then, clenching and unfolding its crumpled hands, breathing softly.

> Rise, little Sally, wipe away your tears!
> Turn to the east, and turn to the west,
> And turn to the very one that you love the best.

She did not tell them of the other baby, and did not even think of it. Once later, on the first birthday she remembered, for a moment.

When she was quite strong again, she returned to her husband in the States, without ever explaining to anybody that she had gone abroad because it gave her a sense of their poverty being really romantic.

She emptied the cup of its last measure, and some spilled over her lip, so she had to reach for a handkerchief and wipe her chin. Oh God, she whispered, groping her way across the fold of her tweed skirt into a pocket.

Anna Lisa again appeared, and set before her a dish of

chicken stewed in thick white gravy, also the bottle of wine. She poured a drink for the girl, who dimpled the mischief and fear she experienced when this fat debauched woman drank nightlong her sorrow. Then she disappeared, and Matilda opened the curtains, With the mist burned away and the moisture fallen from the trees, the sky empty of all but light, and a piercing star the autumnal Jupiter. She faced the autumns and the winters alone, when the father took the children away, tried to protect them from her. And no matter what happens to a woman, she reflected, her body is only mended, only whole, when all her children are near.

Matilda drank another glass of wine. It should be champagne for its tearful clarity, but she could not afford champagne.

The tablecloth had yellow squares; it was thick and firm, like a bedspread. There was a glass vase with marguerites choked down into it; with their cushioned yellow disks and long fluted rays they were artificial, like dressmakers' notions. An ash tray lay stolidly on the cloth, a castled shape with white china battlement. To her glazed eyesight vase and tray were detached as hallucinations from all else in the room.

Unsteadily she powdered her nose. After all, there is no stage like the human face, she thought, and looked as from afar at a woman sitting in a room before a table. Pencilled too many times, she recalled, in too many studios. Now the face was draped with fat. Only the eyes lived any more. The nose was reduced by the other swollen proportions, but the chin exhibited still its firm voluptuous thrust. Not a lively stage, *this* human face! she smirked.

Her thumb crushed the puff into place and snapped the cover of the compact. She ate some of the food and drank more wine, which was a live reptilian creature as with its dry lemonish flavor it slipped down over her tongue. Then she put back her head and gazed sleepily into the lights, pinch-

ing up her cheeks, confused — a divorced woman in a foreign room, with the moon at the top of the sky, dimming the evening stars, shining down into the deep wells of sorrow.

Birthday. In the house the first birthday, here in the same house with garden over the sea. In the house, the first birthday, here in the same place, and all the powder trains of circumstance leading from that time to this night.

She made a one-year cake for the one-year child, with a candle, and unwittingly put beside the burning candle a wooden angel only as tall as a finger, with a round column of a white dress and green wings. But carrying it to the one child she suddenly saw, bereaved, the angel, and somehow remembered, in the presence of the guests. She leaned to the father's mouth and kissed him, for the memory. Surprised and drunk he went out of the house and fell down the cliff to the shore, through their not sleeping together any more. She went back to the kitchen, wishing her womb were heavy. But after that she did not remember again, not for a long time, not until tonight.

Now she grimaced, and reached again for the handkerchief in her pocket. Now she wept, for some peculiar, inexplicable combination of circumstances had at last opened the door upon the hidden room within, and in her heart her own voice had cried, inconsolably, I wanted to bury my baby.

So now in the night, trembling, With the night faded, and the stars faded, the pools of moonwater gone away, without the son and the tenth birthday weeping, what she wanted now was a return to the beginning. For this time was for her in a state of flux exactly as in the birthroom.

The beginning of it would be when

in the hospital she lay over on her back. . . .

Darker than the sky, the sea: colder before the exhausted morning.

HAZEL HAWTHORNE

Corn Exchange Bank Trust Company
C.M.Fox

SAILOR'S BETHEL: 1932 BERENICE ABBOTT

ONE WAY
BUILDING
BUILDING

WATER FRONT: 1932 BERENICE ABBOTT

IN A CLASSROOM

LISTEN . . . can you see the sun on the hillside?
They are coming to a funeral, from far and wide,
They carry him across the slope and bury him aside.

And yet we are quietly sitting in the gloom
Of summer by the bare window of the room.
Light fades, heat dies, and the shadows come.

These words, though splendid and richly rolled,
To him through age and sadness have forfeited their hold:
Another poem, another life, another war, and old.

But to me the very sigh that is despair sounds faith
Who can see the single flower in his funeral wreath.
What are these men saying when they say 'Death'?

And he? When he comes to the part 'His coffin . . .'
To him the words ring like bells heard often
Whose tones bring sorrow again and yet soften.

Some through the window see the green leaves shaking;
Would leave. Some sleep and some are waking.
My heart is full of joy, his heart is aching.
And so we shall read and live and ponder,
But though he rise up and I go under
He shall die and I shall die and others wonder.

SELDEN RODMAN

FROM A RUSSIAN DIARY

Sur. 10

SHUT seems to be The Verb: gent of lower ("ca ne vous fait rien si je me déshabille?") whose baggage strangles a sickly neatness of deuxieme coffin Shut the window (don't you think we'll have too much smoke?) and tactfully funeral director, upon glimpsing milord today drowsing after cakes & ale by mister mome, Shut our door (this morning I was thoroughly amazed: met, en route to breakfast, Fresh Air! — in a troisième common grave)

and lunch was more Shut than a cemetery: 4 separate corpses collectively illatease: no ghost of conversation. Ponderous grub; because (last night, Shut in a breathless box with a grunting doll) I rushed sidewise into Germany (but that swirling tomb of horizontality was less Shut than the emptiest rightangledness which called itself "essen")

lowering weather through SHUTnesses — dank dark fields, smutted towns. Enlivened by

(1) a trainmaster (or whatever) in colours remembering how those children who are our ancestors would emblazon images of hourglass-ladies-fair (displayed, with other touching nonsense, on quais)

(2) Das Magazine — at least 2 really delicious allbutetc. girlies

(3) astonishingly armears of windmill poking over a brief worldedge

(4) "oo"

(5) hugest (andtoadreamstreamlined) locomotive-nakedly-floating-most-lazily-who (throughhanoverstation) slid-whispering-extinction

and framed with

nie wychylać sie
omwierać drzwi
podczas biegu pociągu

. . . Bahnhof Zoo (swirling bells (church we knew (park I walked in)))

at a pause: horridly roboty child smothered by ferocious Blau, swinging a ditto balloon at end of wire and guarded by fallenarches mother. Enter hairless father dragging a scooter by its neck; gestures: wearily . . . but life, life! — they've detached the inert poisonous ball and are batting it foolishly among themselves.

A stop — cakes & ale disappears ("so, goodbye" to me) and kissed 2 arminarm appearing friends, of whom 1 (erect, worldly; mustachios) inherits my erstwhile Shutter's lower.

"The thing is, to make room" he said, wondering toward the ceiling.

"Because there's plenty of everything else" I agree.

"Y-e-s."

"The compartments are small" I dare to assume.

"They are. But this — " indicating a gilded bump occurring for ornamental unreasons "used to stick out more."

His crony (big, cleanshaven; mutilated mouth) temporarily garnished our cubbyhole with the majesty of a waterspout. He too has English: wherein explains that yearns to go gunning in a certain now fabulous land . . .

"I went to the place and everyone was very polite and a girl told me It's all right It's all right because you're a Polish citizen. But the expense!"

"How much would a little hunting trip in Russia cost?" I ask.

"She told me twentyfive dollars. I said Preposterous. Then she said But it's being reduced to seventeen. That's still preposterous."

"Twen-ty . . . five . . . dol-lars?" the mustachios protested vaguely.

"Twentyfivedollarsaday."

"O, a day — hm. Well, I think you'd surprise them, coming there with your guns and butlers and everything" he winked at me and shook à la Deerslayer. "With your butlers! As you used to do it! That would be funny, eh? Something new to them!"

"The funnier it would be, the better" said the waterspout genially. "I should make it as funny as could be. Why not? — This your first time?" he asks myself.

"Absolutely."

"O well . . . but we who've seen Russia before — they can't fool us!" (foot never exterminated cigarette with more premeditated violence)

"I fought the bolsheviks twice and I'd fight them again" (says mustachios, the exterminator having departed) "once as a White Russian officer and once in the Polish army." And learning that my own visit is quite negligibly pacific "why I think they ought to be more afraid of you than of

me" (chuckling horribly) "— I'm all through with 'em; but writing's . . . dangerous."

Twilight — a wet rolling land of gentle & infinite darkness . . . a little silhouette with a lantern, himself dissolved in universal . . . a bird, reading the air . . . (what spirits go & come? curiously into Whom are we all unpossibly melting?)

Mustachios, comfortably bedded with a colossal tome, utters Deutch: apologises ("it's difficult to — to . . . shift") and proceeds "I should think Duranty could help you. I know him. He's a terrible bolshevik."

"Really?"

"Nonono; we just call him that. But he thinks the five year plan will succeed and I don't."

The Perfect Spread For Bread. "Does he think it will spread?"

"I'm not talking about that: if it succeeds, of course it will spread."

"Really?"

"He doesn't think so but I do." Then he shaded childeyes with a woman's hand and asked "are you English or American? — I thought so. Good night"

no objection as I open window!

the train reels. "I've seen all sorts of revolutions" he remarks "and I've come to the conclusion that people are idiots. It doesn't make a darn" (sic) "bit of difference what the government is — because the secret of the trouble is somewhere else. I was radical when I was young (and I'm still young). They told me A republic is the only form of government because it's cheaper." Reel. "But a republic is a thousand times more expensive than a monarchy because in a republic

there are so many people to pay." Reel. "Now if Spain had become communistic, that would be something worth while; but republic — ! It's idiotic." He upsquirmed. "All governments are good when they're young, but later on they all break to pieces; because there's something in everybody that breaks to pieces." And portentously "change, that's all."

11 o'clock: timid customs official salutingly intrudes & extrudes. Is this indeed Stench or merely Poland? The mustachios orders a bottle of water ("I ordered water — she doesn't bring it") which finally arrives ("there: she brings it"): we discuss abolition of passports ("could be done tomorrow") and of customsofficials ("very difficult — even worse in the middle ages"). Presently "why don't you undress and go to bed?" Eventually "why don't you go out and look at the new station, since it's the first time you've been here?" — which I do; 'tis quite the model American bathroom.

Monday, 11 May

Wake alone — he got out at 6 (Warsaw) while I was chez the gentleman from Vienna; but for some unconscious reason there's rather less room than before (perhaps compartments made of elastic nonspace, which contracts automatically when something is put into it and automatically expands when something is taken out)

seek the diner, semiexpecting (thanks to American-procommunists-living-in-Paris — The Horrors Of Capitalist Poland) to be brutally cheated; if not softly knocked down and simply robbed. Frank E. Campbell turns me round with a word of his own, supposed to be "wagon restaurant": march tipsily back through train, past living corpses hit with Fresh Air and luxuriously outstretched on authentic wood.

Promptly and courteously I'm supplied with excellent coffee butter bread and cheese: at nearby table, a plutocrat, insisting that the only waiter (who's obviously Robinson Crusoe) accept one entire American dollar; R. C. obliges with footprint-in-the-sand reflex — my own (less immodest) generosity provokes the more hysterical thanks of 5 languages.

Windmills! Reeling up-&-over-behind villages or standing soishly among sunful skies. An everywhere of fields, spattered with animals, pricked with beings. Big holes of air & crude blocks of land (I can almost smell this world). When the savage beings wear colours, the colours are hard red and tight blue. The gruesome faces of the tiny beings come at me immediately, genuinely, through Shutness. And (look) pinetrees are, whose here Thelike together creates an Aful leaning; and (there) specks (and look) browse all forming one direction. Rhythm: organic Is — neither fillable nor emptyable; actually (how clumsily) alive.

Pause: Unser Gott still effective; beer at 60pf and Berlin newspapers at 30. Across the way something flutters: a woman? Not a woman; woman: immensely crouched beside grey pond she rubs one by one black pots. Ducks patrol, geese survey. And the coarse fierce earth spouts dandelions. This (who's shoving a bottle to someone in 3rd) has dainty legs but her thick face roosts on a tough neck and she grins (unable to smile? Can noone smile in Poland?) Here's a sickly youth; grabbing into himself a soiled child clumsily who waves, waves, as our drowsy train stumbles away — he smiles, an idiot's distant rare smile

after vainly more than suggesting that 100 mark notes must sooner or later disintegrate, friend Robinson cheerfully announces "déjeuner ready." I sit opposite

The Greater
Hotel St. Regis
where 5th Avenue is Smartest

on rear of a menu murderfully wielded by wildish ignorant-looking bozo with a palpably fixed look, who (hearing my commande) timidly indicates through his own Shutness a "petite cheval." The houses hereabouts, hints he, are "tout neuf." (A Swiss. Going to Moscow upon some mission which I cannot understand; will be met — everywhere he travels he's met.) Proudly points to a kind of shield on his lapel: I distinguish 3 rays. From his upper right vest pocket produces a larger version of kind of: I observe 3 lightningflashes, emanating from 3 phallic protuberances labelled "dynamo magneto starter." Below is stamped a mystic word. He flashes a pocketbook — stamped with the same word; and reaches into his upper left vest pocket: appears a metal pencil, with the word again. Points to lapel; the word is on the kind of. I comprehend nothing — "pourquoi?" "Instructeur." Slightly above the kind of, a scarlet ladybug. We arrive at N. . . . . , says he, at 4:30 and noone will get back anyone's passport and everyone will be emptied out of the train and made to undress; and "you smoke camel." Adding, sadly, that all the country about us (all the country from Varsovie on) used to be Russian (while I glare at ravages of portable sawmills)

actual crossing of borderofborders occurred so quickly and so gently not to say softly I didn't know what had happened until saw a lot of jumping off Polish uniforms & some red-flags on an unfinished building & a man in a halfdug ditch looking at his bandaged forefinger

tipped, tactful orchestrator of mourning peeps through Shutness at descending me. Almost child (these porters are almost children) beckons. We enter barndancelike structure:

YMCAish, crammed full of limp stink and interminability; upon one end wall, beaucoup bunting frames the coloured photograph of Lenin. Beside me, at bar of judgement, my Swiss. I help him close his big bright valises: containing at least a dozen blankets, some food, and a flock of occult tools — over nearly everything a mirror has been broken. He, e'er vanishing, translates a few sentences of Russian German. What are these? am languidly asked. Magazines I truthfully reply. They will be examined by the political censor murmurs my questioner, an overgrown schoolboy. Time yawns. The magazines listlessly are inspected by an imperturbable roundish shaveless chap; are casually returned to the overgrown schoolboy, lazily who pushes them at myself. Your passport? Here (with, under "Visas", the carefully pencilled forgot to erase them Russian equivalents for WC and sonofabitch). This is? A typewriter. (Somebody makes a note of the typewriter's existence). Time sighs. What have you here? Coffee. Etcetera, ad infin., time goes to sleep. Eventually somebody gently says something about money. Much pointing. Pass beneath SantaClausred banners to investigate a microscopic slit in a newly boarded wall; behind slit sways somebody's occasionally shouting face: French and German and Polish unwealth disappears, appears a scribbled bit of paper and some dirty oblongs and a few mysterious disks (now Marx grant that the scribbling is a receipt and that the receipt is what my Paris-American-procommunists lectured me anent — Horrors Of Not Getting, Or of Losing, Statement Certifying That Somuch Capital Came In With You — better ask). I ask, even in Russian, and a kindly little man reassures with slowed-up-movie wavings. Shouldn't one present one's travellers' cheques? I threaten. — Nononononono he reassures torpidly. And nothing, even and, happens. But glance at what appeared with the scribble: how tired — asleep, almost . . . what tired, almost asleep, moneyless money! Certainly these rug-like oblongs don't

take themselves seriously? Upon this tinsel disk a hammer and a sickle contentedly embracing. Almost child nudges; evidently I'm off: but he doesn't pick up baggage. "Par ici?" I whisper at the suddenly unvanishing Swiss. Go somewhere and do something my excited fellowsufferer complains in several languages simultaneously. Something? — ah, the ticket, from here to Moscow: I go and I do: but what a tickletless ticket! So, in dream moving, preceded by trifles, through very gate of

inexorably has a magic wand been waved; miraculously did reality disintegrate: where am I?

in a world of Was — everything shoddy; everywhere dirt and cracked fingernails — guarded by one helplessly handsome implausibly immaculate soldier. Look! A rickety train, centuries BC. Tiny rednosed genial antique wasman, swallowed by outfit of patches, nods almost merrily as I climb cautiously aboard. My suitcase knapsack typewriter gradually are heaved (each by each) into a lofty alcove; leaving this massive barrenness of compartment much more than merely empty (a kissing sickle and hammer sink in heaver's palm, almost child trickles away). Dizzily myself seeks Fresh Air. Genially (with an "I'd be naughty if I took it" shrug) the antique wasman refuses a cigarette. Wildly my Swiss greets me — gestures — "train internationale!" (positively ecstatic; has quite forgotten about his mirror). Well, I too have that for which to be thankful: all my gifts came through, even the perfume (after weighing) and the coffee (after spilling) — and ye censor evidently approves of erotica . . . All at once, realise that palpitator is now plural; that the knight of the mystic word has been met. And I also notice (or seem to notice) a none too arcane connection between this plurality and Sir Ladybug's now wondrously reduplicated enthusiasm. . . . But tell, O tell me: where are we?

Who lives? Who has died? Is there space or time or both for e.g. a drink? — yes? Glowingly the lord of the broken mirror asserts that both there is, that he and his noble "camerade" are drinkward bound, that I may join (if am so inclined) their fundamentally most worshipful — (exeunt Swiss and Swissmeeter; the former propelled, the latter propelling: and was that by any chance a scowl which I had from the comrade?) Careful . . . Reenter Swissmeeter and Swiss; the former activating, the latter activated by, a bottle — Everyone Here Is So Young! our toolbringer declaims frenziedly. What about passports? drinklessly I inquire. He asks the noble comrade; who states (in crisp Russian German) that all passports will be examined on board — delicately, in kowtowing francais, tender my eternal gratitude . . .

Reentering formerly-morethanemptiness, find a tall blond stranger simultaneously muttering Russian and tearing at a Shut: he gives up and runs down corridor (leaving ticket and money on a species of tableshelf) as anyhow trainless train hobbles Whereward. Enter the delapidated wasman: he bobs, leers, dances and makes the sleepsign; I bob, leer, dance and make the sleepsign; both of us bob, leer, dance and make the sleepsign — then I hear "denghi." Then I give him something. Then he gives me something. Then we give each other something and I faintly stagger down the trainless train

behind, blundering, 2 Americans (And How). 1 — "this smells like a stable."

Diner: outmiracling of miracle. Deer in snow (a painting). Pink plant (real?) Customer without necktie (real). 3 roubles for 2 boot-air-broat (a half of a ham — and a half of a cheese-sandwich) 1 bottle (vile) beer (but I was warned — Horrors Of Making The Mistake Of Expecting To Find In Russia

What You Elsewhere Find Without Expecting) & 1 glass tea. Round bit of Austrian sits opposite; we talk finance, in Goethe which am beginning to remember. And where (O, where) may I be? — and the headwaiter (no less, probably more) has a bandaged firstfinger. The tea, however, is good. The headwaiter sits, sullenly reading a perfectly blank piece of paper. The deer are in the snow, a painting; and everywhere exist motheaten fly-specked unnecessaries of ultra-ornamentation (if only everywhere did smell like a stable, or something smelled like a stable; but something and everywhere distinctly don't) and nobody seems anything except lonesome; hideously lonesome in hideousness, in rundownness, in outatheelness, in neglectedness, in strictly omnipotent whichnessandwhatness. Ah well, the tea is excellent. But everybody's actually elsewhere (I thou he she or it we you they don't have to be told they you we it or she he thou I am elsewhere because nothing if not elsewhere possibly is possible). Elsewhere being where? Perhaps in Russia — for obviously this whateveritis or defunct-Ritz-on-square-wheels isn't anywhere or anything, isn't Russia, isn't a diningcar, isn't (incredibly enough) Isn't. Never hath been begotten, never shall be conceived, such head- and such waiter; such Deer and such In Snow: such nonlife and such undeath and such grim prolifically cruel most infraSuch

A doll's hand captures a pourboire; a speechless face vaguely goes away.

Barrenness now harbours shutnesswrestler; is at ease, his valuable have disappeared. Begins itself conversation. Russian equals English equals square root of minus 1. French he has not; German do I forget. But of gesture we both (fortunately) are made (and quite unmitigatedly is my companion gentil — incidentally, knows several thousand times more about America than I know, or will ever). Ex-

presses not merely approbation of the home of the slave. Especially was lifted by its "lakes" and moved by its "mountains". Also beheld, during a month and a half, innumerable great cities — ungreat picturepostcards whereof he with not merely alacrity produces (we are now communicating in the aisle, while wasman dumps a linen sheet and a stunted blanket upon each of the compartment's sleepshelves) via purely prodigious portfolio. Feel (with not merely relief) in this mind, and coming out of this mind, utterly natural seriousness; gentle: distinct; eager: he is — quite like a child and totally unlike a childish person — comprised by, composed of, amazingly complex simplicity. (And

seated on the terrace of the maggots, announce "je vais faire un petit voyage en Russie" . . . Larionov rolls back-and-sideways — "Voo?" . . . "Moi" . . . His eyes tighten; quizzically his big face lunges: spinning pours tumbling sounds at Goncharova, who starts; stares — "Vous?" . . . "Moi" . . . Pain heaps quickly itself up in her eyes; caving (memory) surges outward as wish . . . relaxing, her life how very much more than quietly affirms, You are right: Spring is nowhere else.) — And

unlight from smashed lantern totters slowly over filth, over a ("see") picturepostcard of Topeka (over a strolling hard nonmale dirtily whom with a notold tired male adjoining barrenness swallows) over slenderly gesturing scarcely hands. The nontrain shudders slowly. A final cigarette: and America returns to its portfolio. "Change, that's all." I have the lower, for a change. It's cold (even through Shutness) just for a change.

Tues.

Alive?arrive? Whenwhere? — O it's not too late for breakfast (cries, cheerfully tottering beside his meeter and beaming at

scrubby cosmos of field and forest, Swiss) for we're "un heure de retard." I hasten toward deer in snow (perforating a frighteningly sanitary sleepwagon full of Americans) and presently am confronted by black shirt, tieless; soiled dull suit: hair back in a mane — dead ringer for Trotsky. Also noisefully eating are twain apparently Cambridge Mass really USSR dames, with horse teeth and dishevelled cavaliers; this unpretty little group actually seems almost more than mechanically animated (O say, does la régime sovietique hand all singularly ugly nonmales a break?) And tea is good.

Quite after considerable imprisonment (in beforementioned highly polished 1st class slumbermachine — both ends were locked with mighty keys, on account of a station's dangerous proximity; and natty German was trying to get in at one even harder than was I to get out) "good morning" says my picturepostcard Russian pleasantly. "Good morning" say I . . . "Besetzt" Russian admonishes (as try for the Nth time) whereupon wasman — more power to him — seizes my shoulders, dances me to further end of car, points, bobs, weaves, winks, and elsewheres . . . By the bye, Mr. Swiss has a most important correction to make: he was unpardonably mistaken, it appears that our unquestionably innocent and undeniably excellent train isn't late after all (how could it be, comrade?). No; winter time's done for (which explains hitherto odd fact that round Austrian dinnermate compelled me to set my watch 2 hours ahead). "Pays magnifique, n'es-ce pas?" cries the met. To speak truth, I cynically respond, it reminds me of — he is gone: his meeter has coralled him again . . . evidently I smell bourgeois

train's. train's Trainlessness. train's trainlessness Expanding. train's trainlessness expanding To. train's trainlessness expanding to Infinity. Train's Trainlessness Expanding To Infinity vanishes!

Moscow?

"Dadada" from electrified picturepostcard — vividly (look) exit Swi in-tow (alas, without even a farewell nod). The alcove yields its prey. I typewriter knapsack valise fall all over each other, collectively attaining our individual freedoms per not altogether large (but far from peculiarly small) station. Now wouldn't I be in a nice fix if he didn't take it into his unknown head to show up, that prominent Russian writer; the comrade for whom have a gaudy box of chocolates — the fellow to whom obediently I sent a telegram written and signed by that prominent Russian-in-Paris novelist (to whom was introduced by what's her name, the beauteous lady for whose farfamed sister am bringing all those nifty magazines and all that gudjus perfume)? Suppose he simply wasn't here to welcome his brother in literature, alias me? Such would indeed be droll. But something else would be droller! Suppose he did show up, and neither of us recognised the other (it seems, when I stop to think, considerably possible; for both of us haven't the slightest idea what either of us looks like). However, dogs will be dogs and Pavlov, with the aid of lampposts, may have discovered a brand-new recognition reflex; meanwhile, lampposts being unhandy, our hero may just as well ask certain distinguishedlooking comrades whether or no they happen to coincide with the anonymous celebrity who's to direct my very not unerring footsteps (if only everybody didn't look so equally distinguished, to put it mildly!). I approach jittery dude who's a little taller than the divine average

Excuse me: are you Soandso?

hardly, although he farts with an eyebrow. (That was my best Russian, too). Try next the little chap who's just fallen out of an observation balloon into a glass of sour milk

Pardon me: are you SoandSo?

emphatically nyet. Once again — for luck. And this time I

choose a comparatively undistinguished comrade; who may or may not be asleep, feebleminded, or both

Forgive me: are you SoandSo?

he doesn't seem to understand. I reiterate my queery; nothing doing. I soar into Heine — and a light dawns; the face opens, contracts, and in perfect American says

Nn-nn.

Then he turns his socalled back.

Tiens . . .

arrives a mystic word — a word not out of a lapel but out of a past; out of a dingy hole, into which mystically are crushed a stove and four chairs and three pedigreed dogs and a tall smashed woman (who's trying to teach me an unlearnable language) and, very last and most least, my muddled completely self — the Word, opening myself's mouth, escapes: presto! my baggage and I find one another escorted through x, and confronted by y which might easily be mistaken for a fiacre crossed with a catastrophy. Generously amid which monstrosity buried a monotonous whine sprouts softly; and (oddly enough) I understand what the sprout is whining. He wants ten. That's what he wants and he can't and won't want anything else. Life is a mystery and ten is his favorite flower and not nine and not eleven and why not. A shaggy imitation of insanity weaves and wallows before me, tying and untying itself in willbes and havebeens of frantic affirmation: a looney Santa Claus, whose 8 tiny reindeer consist of something very (very) distantly ressembling a horse — something whose restless front- and rear-ends are continually readjusting, but without the smallest success or as if their hidden protagonists quite vainly were suppressing a natural inclination to separate and become (as it was in the beginning) a horse's before and a horse's behind. "Dyesyichdyesyichdyesyichdyesyichdyesyich . . ." From far and

wide, but chiefly wide, at least a dozen other proprietors of wonderful one hoss shays tune in. All (willbes) weave and (hasbeens) wallow: a centripetal moan explodes —. Desperate, begin shouting categorical imperatives at subjunctively unexisting phantom who hugs my baggage: assure him and mankind that a different concept now possesses me that there are new worlds for old and may long live whatsoever might impermanently serve as a refuge for possessions temporal. The phantom nods: we advance towards an outhouse. Glimpse (left) of little poorish square: many human (presumably) beings, disguised as incidents and accidents, are busily walking (walking overearnestly; walking as if they were bent on proving to someone their almost if not quite aliveness). — Find within outhouse (which isn't an outhouse) myself, beside, and partly atop, Teutonic Beau Brummel who's exchanging with an emaciated Slavic nonmale something slipshod and otherwise suggestive of the American language. By timid interpolation the non- isn't a whit alarmed (although I must smell more than ever bourgeois) — nay, non-volunteers to guide me, together with Brummel, unto most very wonderfulest oasis entitled "intourist"; but first check your baggage, comrade. I, comrade, check my comrade baggage. And now, comrade, give somuch to the comrade. Embellish the phantom (who shows no sign of joy) and greedily our comrade threesome advances toward the poorish little square. Hearseburstingly out rumbles what once was bus — the non- and non-'s charges (and socialism only knows how many less or more comrades) being more or less (but chiefly less) inside. Amen. Pray humbly permission to pay for 3 and politely am permitted to pay for 2 and am gently prevented from offering an enormous banknote to a quiet seamstresslike woman who functions as faretaker and Beau remarks that he has been in India which "I like; very much." So do I. One of our closest neighbours, a comrade with a full pack and no hair, yields to early swerve, knocking

kittycornered half a dozen comrades (including So do I). And beyond immemorially mildewed Shutnesses many things which might (or might not) be comrades seem to be leaping for what might not (or might) be lives, thumphurlingly while we hurlbump all (bumphurlthump) along

. . . suddenly the whole universe stops —

recovering, trio dissentangles self from extraneous legs and arms; to (lumpishly) jutt, into a street.

Non- points: sign INTOURIST

again: an alarmingly ample structure, possibly a crematory? "And this is the Hotel Metropole."

"Very expensive" I feebly protest, as (with a flipperwiggle of adieu) BB floats toward oasis.

"O no, not in valuta — well, goodbye: and what is your name? Kem-minkz?" and gave me a nice smile

my fearingly eyes explore "the Hotel Metropole" (never, in America, has this comrade stopped at a really "first class" robbinghouse. Studiously, in Europe, did he avoid the triple-star of Herr Baedeker . . . and now?) "Change, that's all." O plutocracy, O socialism — gird we up our loins: forward, into paradox . . .

At the sight of a flight of marble-or-something steps framed by boundlessly flowering plants we verily tremble: is (one wonders) the candle worth the game? And just as if to answer said unsaidness, down something-or-marble vista visionary with vegetation waddles one prodigiously pompous, quite supernaturally unlovely, infratrollo with far (far) too golden locks; gotup rather than arrayed in ultraerstwhile vividly various whathaveyous; assertingly (if not pugnaciously) puffing a gigantic cigarette; vaguely but unmistakably clutching, to this more hulking than that mammiform appendage, a brutally battered skeleton of immense milkcan.

("And they talk of Swinburne's women" myself comfortingly quoted, floating meanwhile briskly upward and inward). A not imposing counter. Behind it, a halfbald notimposing clerk wailing DAs into a not imposing telephone. Above, around, unbelievable emanation of ex-; incredible apotheosis of isn't. Thither, hauntingly hither, glide a few uncouth ghosts. Near, lounge crepuscularly 2 comehithering poules (alive?) At my left elbow, anyone (with the air of having been someone and who is now merely patient and helpless) and for whom the halfbald is telephoning or pretending to telephone or probably both. In vain — patiently he abandons the instrument to its fate: regards my neighbour helplessly, boosting eyebrowless eyebrows; the regarded helplessly comrade patiently shrugs, copiously meanders. "Have you any rooms?" I said.

"Yes" (not at all disagreeably).

"How much are they?"

"Five dollars. But that includes breakfast."

"Five . . . The redfox leans toward me. Why do you wish to go to Russia?"

Because I've never been there.

(He slumps, recovers). You are interested in economic and sociological problems?

No.

Perhaps you are aware that there has been a change of government in recent years?

Yes, I say without being able to suppress a smile.

And your sympathies are not with socialism?

May I be perfectly frank?

Please!

I know almost nothing about these important matters and care even less.

(His eyes appreciate my answer). For what do you care?

My work.

Which is writing?

And painting.

What kind of writing?

Chiefly verse; some prose.

Then you wish to go to Russia as a writer and painter? Is that it?

No; I wish to go as myself.

(An almost smile). Do you realise that to go as what you call Yourself will cost a great deal?

I've been told so.

Let me earnestly warn you (says the sandyhaired spokesman for the Soviet Embassy in Paris) that such is the case. Visiting Russia as you intend would be futile from every point of view. The best way for you to go would be as a member of some organization —

But, so far as I know, I'm not a member of any organization.

In that case you should go as a tourist. And I'm speaking not only from the financial standpoint: do you realise that without some sort of guidance you will not see anything, let alone understand?

I realise what you mean. But —

Yes? he encourages.

Again frankly —

Well?

I'm ready to take my chances. . . . Dollars?"

"A day."

"O, a day. Hm."

"But you have valuta" (that serious disease).

"Perhaps" darkly suggested Scotch descent "it would be worth while . . . what's the name of that — Volks: they might know of something cheaper there."

"Perhaps."

"Could you give me the address?"

"Yes." Consults a species of encyclopaedia: finding, laboriously translates something upon iota of paper and

hands to me. A streetname — unfamiliar . . . why? Because, at Mayo's Marine Bar, one ultrabenevolent denizen of Cambridge Mass (who hibernates half of each and every year in Russia, spinning meanwhile an opus on the theatre) gave me his visitingcard, having first adorned its backside with the name (Volks) and address (which I don't think is what I now hold in my hand) of Moscow's foremost Society For The Prevention Of Misguidance To Foreigners. — Our fumbling through pockets hero finally exhumes Mr. Spinner's gift, remarking "there's an American who lives here: don't know whether he's here now . . . "

"Please" the clerk said, taking (before I have time to compare addresses) the card and turning it over. "Yes" he said, having read benevolent's cognomen "I think he lives here."

"?" (my Here had meant USSR; his means the Hotel Metropole).

"Shall I telephone?"

"Of course" (nothing short of nonplussed).

". . . he will be right down." And time moans in time's sleep . . . and a professorial voice almost pettishly inquires "well why don't you recognize me?" immediately adding "I thought you were Russian: it's the cap — how did you know that everyone here wears them? Yes, of course, Lenin began it. Are you alone? Dear me, there seem to be a great many wives parked in Paris — by the way, I'm so sorry I didn't realise that the charming lady . . . you missed the first of May? Odear. But how in the world did you discover my address? No, not really! Well! Isn't it extraordinary how things happen. Come come: we must have a talk — let's not wait for the elevator: you'll notice" (greying his tone) "that the standard of efficiency is somewhat . . . not that they haven't done wonders!" (together mounting a group of slightly less marble-or-something) "Do you see that sign — pair, rook, mah, care? It means Barber. He's an excellent

barber, incidentally, if you should want your hair cut. But what was I going to say — O yes, you'll notice a great many words, borrowed from other languages; Russian is full of them — "

A sunlitness highceilinged. "Quite luxurious for me. Yes, that's a radio: there's one in every room; the programs are mostly propaganda, but very interesting. On this wall you behold my indispensable theatre map — it gives the names dates and locations of all the plays. Of course I shouldn't dream of living like this anywhere else: the point is, what you spend here enriches the government instead of some private individual who has a great deal too much already — and it's really not expensive; they give you an excellent breakfast with real coffee (you probably don't realise that coffee is a tremendous luxury!) — not that things aren't getting better every day; it's really nothing short of miraculous, what they've done). Mymymymymy. How I envy you. Seeing Moscow for the first time. . . . O, I meant to ask: have you had breakfast? Then do let me order you something! Eggs? and jam? Not at all: if you knew how glad I was to see you; it's no trouble, I merely telephone the restaurant — you'll soon discover that it's a pleasure to telephone in Moscow, the service is so efficient; not at all like Paris — "

a few terrifying words directed at invisibility

"— they'll be right up with it. Yes indeed. The service here is really excellent. And while we're waiting, let's step out on the balcony (which isn't very good syntax, but you'll forgive me!)" opening a Shutness, through which we crawl "as you see, I'm pretty centrally situated. That big thing over there is the Bolshoi theatre — Bolshoi means Big — and this over here . . . morgen!" (bowing to a pale overapparelled youth who, with a very handsome thoroughly European lass, graces the continuation of our precarious porch) "you've heard of him, of course: a leader of the left wing of the

German cinema — she's quite attractive, isn't she . . . but what was I saying? O, before I forget: let me warn you particularly against newspaper correspondents." And, in an almost whisper "a terrible thing happened the other day — you know Gene Tunney? well, Tunney — who's really a nice fellow, perfectly honest at heart and of course a Roman Catholic — came here; and the officials opened their arms to him and he was much impressed by everything and went everywhere and showed a genuine understanding of the basic principles on which this workers' republic is founded. Really. Yes. But some of the newspapermen, who are always doing mischievous things — I assure you, they'll poison your mind if they possibly can; you really must take care! — these mischievous correspondents (at least the Russians are honest thieves) got hold of poor Gene Tunney and they took him to a place where ecclesiastical refuse of one sort and another was being burnt — not the really good things, of course: the good ones are carefully preserved by the government, it's extraordinary what they've done, really extraordinary — by the way, this is a dead secret: I'm interested in ikons, myself, but from a purely business standpoint, you understand — even my worst enemies can't accuse me of being religious! . . . Now I've lost the — O: well, and the correspondents arranged it so that, just as poor brother Tunney came walking in, a lifesize statue of Our Lord Jesus Christ rolled right out of the flames clear to Gene's most Catholic feet." Giggle. "At least that's the story. Tunney, of course, was horribly shocked — it spoiled his entire Russian trip — now I wonder if we shouldn't go inside; your breakfast ought to arrive shortly —" (in we crawl) "— ah, here it is" (and a respectful waiter respectfully deposits the tastefully arranged trayful of delicate dainties) "Dada Da — SPASEEBA" (exit respectfully the respectful) "please sit down. Isn't it good. Yes. I suggest that you make the Metropole your headquarters — that is, if there should happen to be a vacancy,

and provided you think you can afford it. Of course one can always comfort one'sself — I always do — with the reflection that what you pay here goes directly to the state, instead of enriching some dreadful plutocrat. Odear. I suddenly remember something: I must go to the bank and get money for my hotel — would you like to come along? It might be a good thing for you to know where the bank is. And that reminds me of something else: I really must pay brother What'shisname; it was such a good party and I practically invited myself . . . but how can I possibly persuade brother What'shisname to take it? that's the question. Hm. Ah! — I shall fold up a bill and put it in this envelope" (suiting action to word) "and I shan't tell the good brother how much it is; I really want to pay my share — yes. Well, shall we start? Nonono; finish your cup of coffee, by all means: there's no telling when you'll get another — I'm exaggerating, of course; as a matter of fact people live very well here. And excuse me, please, for rushing you this way, but if we don't leave immediately the bank will be closed; besides, I really must exonerate myself before brother What'shisname . . . so you think you'll stop here, if you can find a room? For a few days, perhaps — hm. I think that's a very sound idea; not to mention the pleasure it would give me . . . I know personally several of the people to whom you have letters. Yes. It's almost as though one were seeing Russia with virgin eyes, one'sself. Quite, in fact. HAH-RAH-SHO!"

right turn: at end of hall "here's his door" (tapping gingerly) "let's not go in, he might be with — O, how do you do! No, we can't stay: well, only for a moment — let me present brother Cummings." A shy young American, surrounded by batchelorneatness, shakes my hand. "Excuse us for intruding: it's about that excellent party to which I invited myself — but I did! — nono, really we mustn't, you see we're on our way to the bank, but my conscience troubled me so much:

please be merciful and let me pay my share!" "Your share was practically nothing" objects shy. "Well anyway" (most mysteriously passing him the envelope) "do let me give you this. And thank you so much for the party — not at all, my dear fellow — by the way, won't you come to lunch? Well, another time, then: DAS-VEE-DAN-YAH!" We hurry up the hall. "Charming, isn't he (I wanted to leave before he opened it). One of the few really nice — did I warn you against correspondents in general? Good. And now we'll go right down stairs . . . O, what about your baggage?"

To halfbald my mentor speaks wingless words — promptly I exchange still sinful (why can't I remember to erase those two) credentials for a (by some miraculous accident unoccupied) sanctuary, situated on floor 1 of the Hotel Metropole, Moscow, USSR ("you're really terribly lucky. To my certain knowledge there hasn't been a vacancy here for months — of course you've heard of the housing problem; people really do marry to get a room. O don't worry about your passport — it's the custom: they'll give it back later. Incidentally, the room you're getting isn't as large as mine, of course; but on the other hand it's nearer certain indispensable conveniences (did you bring some with you?Odear) and I'm not at all sure that your view isn't even better than my own"). Collecting what I, comrade, checked in the comrade outhouse will cost — the comrade clerk seems cautious on this point — about 10 roubles ("is that all the izvostchik at the station wanted? I'm surprised! But you were probably right to come by buss; the fact is, it's almost impossible to find a taxi. — Now where is my . . . don't tell me I've forgotten to take that pill! I have. Excuse me, I'll just run upstairs and be right down — how perfectly stupid and ridiculous!") Time stirs; whispering, relaxes . . . until, armed with all things unnecessary and necessary (including a twice forgotten letter of credit and a violent attack of indigestion) the benefactor of

benefactors announces "— we're off!" and descending comrade visionary vista we comrades emerge: into

Fresh Air, burgeoning with amorphous beings: sunlight, tucked with swarming closeups of oldfashioned streetcars ("don't they remind you of Harvard Square," the Sibyl mused, whimsically). "I was just thinking how somehow Athens-Of-America everything seems" agreed (dimly) Aeneas; who never (no, not even in Bossting) beheld so frank a flaunting of optical atrocities. Eheu fugaces . . . posthumously the mostly becapped men wear anything; the nonmen (especially those who are of maternal construction) show an indubitable preference for kiddiefrocks (reaching less than halfway to the knee) and socklets; as a result, only comrade God can make a tree — but even comrade Kem-min-kz knows that the sum total would be not quite half worse if women were present.

"I like it here so much!" lyrically exclaims Virgil "have you noticed a particular feeling in the air — a tension?"

"Have I!"

And Dante has. Apparently one cubic inch of Moscow is to all the metropolis of New York — so far as "tension" goes — as all the metropolis of New York is to tensionless Silver Lake, New Hampshire: around, through, under, behind, over myself do amazingly not physical vibrations contract, expand, collide, mesh, and murderfully procreate: each fraction, every particle, of the atmosphere in which moving moves, of my moving, of me, of cityless city, of peopleless people, actually is charged to a literally prodigious degree with what might faintly be described as compulsory psychic promiscuity. Whereby (if in no other respect) Moscow of the inexorably obsessing mentality, and merely mad New York (not to mention most complacent Cambridge Mass and proudly peaceful New Hampshire) belong to different

universes . . . verily, verily have I entered a new realm, whose inhabitants are made of each other; proudly I swear that they shall not fail to note my shadow and the moving of the leaves.

A singularly unbanklike bank: outside, mildly imposing mansion; inside, hugely promiscuous hideousness — not the impeccable sanitary ordered and efficient hideousness of American or imitation American banks, but a strictly ubiquitous whenwhere of casual filth and aimless commotion and profound hoping inefficiency. We both give groundless ground before a Herculean nonman (from whom Cerberus himself might shrink) and carom off several halfasleep youthless youths. Dreamily in rags a greenskinned hunchback passes, picking his teeth; and in rags repasses, rubbing one dreamily larger than the other ear — back and strollingly forth many emptyfaced uniforms clumsily are leading nowhere guns — a pregnancy on kneehigh boots totes everywhere a halfunited bundle of something angrily. Amid which phantasmal picnic are windows, arguments, transactions, prayers: more particularly a little Jew baffles himself against fate — proclaiming in various lingos that he cannot wait longer having stood in line three days; that tomorrow he must be somewhere else, that his desperate business could easily be consumated in 2 shakes of a lamb's — "Be Patient" booms westernly thick middleaged businessman — "look at ME!" Virgil and I obey. "I'm General Electric" boom adds sumptuously; pushing (in the puss) a comrade who would sacrifice the rights of man to human wishes "and I spend just ninety-three percent of my time here trying to get money, although everything's supposed to have been arranged beforehand; but you know how it is." "Of course it will be better soon" Virgil coos "in fact it's getting better every day." "WHAT'S getting better." "Why the standard of effic —." GE snorts; then grins "listen. Don't make a big

mistake. It's easy for the correspondents; they see things from the outside: but we" (with a gesture which commingles London Paris and New York) "are IN it."

"But I've got to go away!" shreiks the little Jew disastrously.

"Nothing of the sort" booms GE.

"Whaddahyahmeen?" deliriously martyr screams.

"I mean" ponderously retorts big business "that there's no Got To here except Wait!"

Poor Sibyl is quivering and sweating with a combination of stomachache, suppressed critical faculty, and not unnatural fatigue — vainly does he implore Russianly, vainly assert his ineradicable loyalty to Labour; we are merely sent to another window whose protagonist sends us back to the first, whose protagonist sends us again to the second, whence we are directed to a third and a fourth; finding ourselves (at the end of twenty promiscuous minutes) once more at number 1 — where (without the slightest warning) something happens; my guardian's woes are heard, his letter of credit is inspected and his credentials approved . . . we relax).

"You know" I (dazed) whisper "what strikes me most is that all these inefficient officials appear to be perfectly honest."

"But I've got to go —" the Jew sobs.

All will be well (Virgil now tranquilly soothes) just keep calm . . . then, starting — "my God!"

"What's up?"

GE laughs heartily (than hearty laughter at that bankless bank a threelegged moose bearing in its silver beak 5 orange kittens would be slightly less startling); Virgil furiously blushes: peering, among heads cropped and uncropped, I perceive that the comrade who (almost) was in the very act of sealing my illstarred angel's fate has indelibly ceased to function . . . also, that over the comrade is now bending a nonman (are they in consultation? Not exactly — he merely is being

taught, at this critical juncture, to run an adding-machine)
"I told you!" moans GE mopping mirthtears "can you beat it?" Apparently nobody but itself can beat it — for from a totally strange window out bounces letter of credit with requisite moneyless money: and, fleeing, I glimpse (with a corner of confused eye) the little Jew wrestling crazily with GE and a filthy big baby stealthily creeping creeping (under what may have been a table) toward what has served as (among many other thingless things) a waste-basket

"such" muses mentor "are the evils of beaurocracy; not that —" and we dodge a tumbledown exRolls (driven at 40mph by something in half a uniform for benefit of hatbox clasped by a somethingelse in sporty new suit of winter underwear) "but of course it's simply unbelievable what they've accomplished" he resumes. "Was it worse?" lightly I asked. "Unbelievable says the Sibyl" — that is, what they've done of course. O it was much worse. Yes indeed. But I always feel that we haven't any right to criticise: the point is, you are now in a workers' republic which is bound to make mistakes like anything else; but the mistakes are being rectified as quickly as possible — and after all, the ideal is what counts, isn't it!" "I shouldn't wonder if life is what —" (plucking him from a careening upholsteryless Daimler) "counts" (and shoving him past a leaping recent Ford) "— was that a taxicab?" I ask. "Thank you, I didn't see the Jehu: yes, that was a taxicab, and we're going to have a great many of them soon. My dear fellow, let me beg you most earnestly not to make the ridiculous mistake of judging by appearances; the thing to realise is, that here people run themselves: they are truly — for the first time in human history — free . . . now where am I going: yes. Our next stop is a very important personage: all the dispatches which are sent out by newspapermen have to pass through him;

might be immensely valuable to you. I'll tell him you're America's leading —" "Puh-jahlstah." "Well well well, I thought you said you didn't speak Russian!" "I don't." "What a pity; you ought to find yourself a teacher, a nice attractive young teacher; that's what everyone does: it's so much easier to learn from the pillow, you know (and it won't cost you much, in fact practically nothing) — after five or six months you'll be able to understand a surprising amount. How? — you can't afford to stay? — O but the Revolutionary Literature Bureau will be glad to have you do something for them, and they pay well — in roubles of course, but you can live on roubles. Nobody really ought to live as I do, at a foreigners' hotel where roubles aren't accepted: in fact, my only excuse is that I have a little money, and I enjoy spending it here where every penny goes to help the workers — what a pity you couldn't arrive for the first of May! — now for a pass" (soldier; conversation: a species of affidavit is made out by benevolence: we climb chewed stairs in a mouldy building; enter a neat dentistlike reception room). "The man whom you're going to meet" in a whisper "is very cultured: yes; he knows what's going on in artistic circles all over the world — I want you to compare him with the American equivalent: O — how do you do!" (bowing to a plump notman who smiles agreeably, converses briefly in stilted English, bowingly departs) "— that was one of my secretaries. Very intelligent girl. Attractive, don't you think? Well of course they can afford to dress better — besides, it's more or less in their line of business . . . do sit down; he's preposterously busy, we may have to —" an ornate wallslice opens: appears Tallness crowned with Skull

"please — come in"

a voice modulated, a smile orchestrated; the strictly organic dignity of that subtle gracious (and possibly mythical) creature "a gentleman" . . . look, feeling myriad impacts of focussed carefulness; talk, dissected by daintily strenuous

tentacles of appraisal; listen, always confronted with (high in the glistening volume of forehead) a healed hole . . .

"please — come again."

Down chewed stairs plunging, resume clumsily the how merely nervous street, the mercilessly general more aggressive vibration, the unskillfuly less infinite obsession. "Do please have lunch with me! We can stroll around afterwards and I'll show you the old and new Gay-Pay-Oo buildings — of course you know what the "three letters" stand for; O not at all, quite the contrary; the Gay-Pay-Oo is a most benevolent organization, all those rumors which one hears are sheer nonsense: I tell you, quite the most intelligent and delightful people I know are in the Gay-Pay-Oo; you'll see for yourself when you meet them — the whole idea is entirely different, my dear fellow: all members of the Gay-Pay-Oo are persons of the highest calibre, especially chosen for their idealism; it's an honour, you understand: nonono, they're not police at all, they're guardians of the proletariat, and quite the most splendid organization in Soviet Russia — altogether noble and unselfish — why, I've been accused of being in the Gay-Pay-Oo myself . . . but what were we talking about: yes. Well if you like, we'll go to a really Russian place; except that I'm afraid you won't be able to stand it — the smell is pretty bad. I took a couple of American friends there recently, and they didn't seem to appreciate the food —"

Lunch (underground) at circa 2 roubles per head
fair soup
sweetly dreadful "macaroni" and unmeat (the latter could not be cut either by me or by mentor: when hammered for several minutes it split)
fearful perfume-beverage
not quite right desert
a truly magnificent stink ("they should give clothespins

here" says Vergil, nipping his nose) being the one and only redeeming feature of this otherwise merely Very Bad Child's. "Odear, I must go back to the hotel and take a pill — my stomach isn't what it used to be: afraid I gave you a very bad introduction to Moscow; you shouldn't have been taken here — well just to make up for this, I'll show you Lenin's mausoleum"

Seeing the Sights
the Slogan Of Slogans
itself disconcertingly illpresented, occurs near an enticing gate via which we're bumped by a most wonderfully refreshing lump of nearly comradeless space: on one edge of this lump sits
L's M
a rigid pyramidal composition of blocks; an impurely mathematical game of edges: not quite cruelly a cubic cerebration — equally glamorless and emphatic, withal childish . . . perhaps the architectural equivalent for "boo! — I scared you that time!" (hard by are buried martyrs)
the lump ends at Something Fabulous
a frenzy of writhing hues — clusteringly not possible whirls together grinding into one savage squirtlike ecstasy: a crazed Thinglike dream solemnly shouting out of timespace, a gesture fatal, acrobatic (goring tomorrow's lunge with bright beyondness of yesterday) — utterly a Self, catastrophic; distinct, unearthly and without fear.

The tearing of mere me and this miracle from each other demands effort on part of failing benevolence ("yes, it's impressive — but you should see the inside, which has been turned into a Revolutionary Museum: really I must get back to the hotel, please don't desert me now; I wonder if I've been

poisoned — Odear, you can look at that any time: there are so many much more important things") who increasingly ressembles a walking corpse. If combining the best (I murmur) elements of barberpole and pineapple be opium, more power to it. Wc cringes, palm over belly. "Where can I send a telegram?" I wonder; inconsiderately adding "— to my wife." He starts: staggers "O yes — of course: a devoted husband . . ." "From the hotel?" I devotedly persist. "Yes, but the clerk wouldn't know how much to charge — you'd better go directly to the postoffice just around the corner; there's a charming woman who speaks French and German and (I think) a little English — ow! — well, we're almost back, thank Heaven!" "Don't be uneasy; I shall not inform the republic of your heresy" I promise: at which Virgil recovers sufficiently to gasp "what is that proverb . . . the devil is sick, the devil a monk — Odear!" "Now you're talking: incidentally, has the proletariat any particular commerce with psychology?" "Psychology? Why, don't you know Pavlov's work? One of the monumental —" "Or as Pope Watson has it, you ring a snake and show your bell a child. But what of Our Lord Sigmund Freud?" "Odear, are you one of those people? You aren't going to analyse me, are you? Please!"

"Charming woman" (fiftyish) speaks only Russian and German, latter to such an extent that decide I'll dilate my daily wrestlings with yah nyeh hahchoo. Purely for practice, lisp in numbers to a grinning comrade at keycounter; heartened, await lift and further progress. Hereupon occurs a curious phenomenon: many obviously native citizens are also expecting the elevator — fact, there's a small multitude — but when that far from mighty machine arrives, its deus very rudely excludes a number of worthy compatriots while, very politely, accepting the mere foreigner myself (who was lurking on the outskirts and doesn't believe that the last shall

be first; just a good democrat). Sanctuary, not overample, sufficiently sunlit, appears as haven of refuge — but knock: Sibyl's himself again, wants me to help him call on two "young people" upstairs . . . something about having received a note from them, impossibility of their lunching with him; must arrange something. We climb (on foot, at my request) flights of less and less marble-or-something-or-marble and exhaustedly arrive before an open door through which the birds have flown. On foot (by request) we descend to the foyer's cigarettecounter — and vaguely I observe an adolescent pair of uncouths emanating awkwardly on happiness. "You are being signalled" I hint. "Odear, there they are!" (he rushes forward: instantly parts of the pair begin falling down revealing a third uncouth; who's also full of bundles — a livid pygmy with a sharp face, which upon making my acquaintance almost swallows its cigarette) "we were just looking for you!" It seems that the pair, pimply American stripling embarrassed in a Russian blouse and his somewhat starved decidedly Radcliffe helpmate, are on the verge of deserting the Hotel Metropole for a less sumptuous life. I gather that the livid is assisting. Blouse hasn't enough valuta to patronize "fleet" of Ford taxis outside — the Metropole's modest contribution to proletarian cause; you, capitalist, pay in advance at the desk — and unattached taxis are scarcer than hen's teeth and, in short, death is stingless. But Virgil will have none of that — cheerfully he shoulders bundles (bidding me do likewise): merrily our quintet attains the sidewalk; blithely the blouse departs in search of conveyance, gaily his spouse spurns further aid and every cloud has a silver lining (and the third uncouth bows to the bottom of a ruined raincoat and waves courtierlike a sweatsoiled sombrero, pronouncing in Queen's English the word Tomorrow). "They're awfully nice — her husband teaches English: of course you've read his distinguished father, whom the Russians consider one of America's great writers although

you may not — that little man helping them is an authority on military tactics" then, beaming upon my greatly perplexed self "three good Cantabridgians should meet today. Come!"

long gently rising street. A priest passes, motheaten — Virgil gloats "they're few and far between, now: O not at all, that persecution story is ridiculous my dear fellow; the point is, anyone who still wants to serve The Lord can do so, but The Lord's servant must have a useful occupation or starve; people have awakened to the fact that religion is opium: in a worker's republic there's no place for parasites . . . excuse me." Halting, peeps cautiously into his shirt; resumes "a false alarm. Yes, religion is inextricably bound up with the family; and since the safety of the state depends on the abolition of the family, religion must go. Of course it's hard for some of us who've been educated according to bourgeois traditions; but if we're intelligent we see that there's no other way — not that I miss my religion, quite the contrary. Odear, you really must stay at least six months; there are so many things to understand, so many thrilling aspects of this new world —" we enter a gloomful dwelling. "I admire Mary more than any girl I've ever met" Virgil states enthusiastically. "— Mary?" "Yes, indeed a splendid person — notice this hotel" (as he spoke, a mean reek of rancid food drifted over us) "how I love it! In this hotel I have lived longer than in any other. Yes. I feel about it almost as a wandering mariner feels about his beloved home — not really, of course; my own bourgeois tendencies are pretty well stifled, thank — well, here we are." Corridor pitchdark; glimpse of several buxom nonmen, attired as maids, respectfully who recoil as Virgil gropes toward something . . . knocks. Crack of light — sharp hysterical squeal "you can't come in! You can't!" — tiny door opens — "you mustn't! The room's in such a mess!" and I'm bowing to a worn doll

with naked emaciated arms, vast feet, sunken eyes, mop of colourless hair, crazed jumpy laugh, and 2 stockingless laths protruding from ultraabbreviated fiddlefrock.

"Sitdownsitdownsitdownsitdown" the 3rd good Cantabridgian's mangled voice chatters foolishly "can you imagine it, can you imagine what she's done now? the bitch!"

"Mary!" admonishes Virgil, with mock gravity "is that the way to refer to your female progenitor?"

"She is, she is; mother is a bitch — excuse me, I suppose I shouldn't be so frank before a guest . . ."

"What has mother done now?" the benefactor of benefactors inquires with a helpful smile.

"Done? What has she done? She's gotten what she calls pneumonia! That's the latest excuse."

"Perhaps you ought to explain the circumstances" says mentor "I'm sure our guest will be interested."

"Very much" I corroborate.

"Well you see" (twisting her gnarled skinnyness) "I was once a fool — do you understand? No? He doesn't understand!"

"You mean that you got married" the Sibyl slyly interprets.

"Married. Yes. How lovely. I married a man. Nice pretty ceremony. You know. Flowers! Bless you my children and all that sort of nonsense — well, he wasn't a man because he was a beast, a beast!"

"You don't spare your enemies, Mary" our guardian angel comments admiringly.

"Why should I? They don't spare me! Do they? You know me; do they?"

"You're going to win, my dear" encourages the spinner "I'm sure of that."

"I'll win" the doll's voice snapped, to open in a sob "— hun! Yes, I'll win. — Well, ten years ago I was born. Do you

know what that means? I became a communist. And I wanted to come to Soviet Russia where a child can grow up to be free; and the beast went to a judge, to the courts of the fair state of Ohio, and the old judge made a great speech giving what he called my Husband the custody of the child — on what grounds? On what grounds do you suppose? — Tell him on what grounds!"

"You tell him" invites benevolence.

"On . . . the . . . grounds . . ." (with a deeply gradual writhe beginning in empty eyes and ending in famished hips) "That A Woman Who Puts Her Political Ideas Before Her Family Is Unfit To Be A Mother. HAHAHAHAHA!" — the sawdust body exploded in paroxysms of coughing; a snapshot, stuck in mirroredge, slips slightly.

"There is really something unique about the cruelty of what millions call Justice" mentor murmured. A microscopic room quivered with coughing; tranquilly from flimsy wall glared at the smallest bed one fatfaced child . . . "There there, dear Mary: you'll win!" (and coughing subsides).

"So the question was, how to get him here — I asked all my friends, but none of them could manage it —"

"She asked even me" giggles angel, making a wry face "but I somehow couldn't see myself successfully abducting a baby boy from the bosom of his bourgeois family and placing him in the hands of his communist mother in Moscow! — just an old batchelor."

"Bless you, dear friend, for your counsel" the puppet whimpered "if it hadn't been for such encouragement . . . well, finally my mother agreed to do it — My Mother — haha! At the last moment, I get a cable from her, saying my child can't be moved because he's got to have an appendicitis operation! Can you imagine? Can you? — she had one breast cut off for cancer and thought nothing of it; but just because a kid has a scratch on his belly he's got to stay quiet for three weeks! Ugh! — And now she's delayed it a second time, to

give herself what she calls A close call . . . Pneumonia! What will that creature do next?"

"You must fight on" cooed benevolence "and you're a great little fighter. I often wonder, Mary, where you got your own fighting spirit."

"Not from her!" the marionette snarled "mother has no strength of character: mother and father never got on since I can remember, but she keeps going back to him — why mother couldn't live without him" words skidding in how much more contempt than a human voice possibly could extrude "— no, really."

"I believe it" said I, seriously.

"Wonderful girl . . . simply extraordinary . . . a perfect trump" Virgil mused "when I think of her I'm almost proud of Cambridge." We turn a corner; embark upon a long muddy treeful boulevard, clogged with overhurrying nonmen and men. "This is one of our main streets, it divides the inner Moscow from the outer — very much like the Ring in Vienna, if you know Vienna . . . lovely tranquil town: but of course I prefer Moscow." "The police were charging when I was in Wien" our hero gently remarks "and the horses were trying not to step on women; and beggars stood just inside cafes, never moving, with holes in their faces for eyes; and it rained a great deal." "Really?" he surveyed me with a mixture of respect and alarm "you were there during the rioting? They smashed the Bristol, didn't they?" "It had been mended when I arrived. O well, I imagine Russia was a most interesting place during the revolution . . ." "You mean that what you've seen so far doesn't interest you?" "I didn't mean that. I did mean, how different something moving is from something won." "O but nothing's really won — that is, of course the revolution's victorious and the future of humanity firmly established, but Russia is still fighting, you know; her triumph can't possibly be complete until the rest of the world

comes to its senses, until the proletariat asserts its rights everywhere and capitalism bows its bloody head" (he sighed; adding) "how nice the colour is: do you see that girl with her red scarf? It means she's a young communist . . . there are thousands of fine healthy lassies like her." "Where are we going, if I may ask?" "Why I thought I'd take you to see the president of the Writers' Club: a charming person; you'll like him particularly because he speaks French — not that I don't wish I could speak French well myself; however, I take comfort in the fact that I've really mastered a little Russian; the accent is what bothers me most; but my teachers tell me I'm improving every day (I do hope it isn't mere politeness!)"

An authentic chaos of unhuman smells, a joyous anarchy of noises which are not words, a merciful complexity of illogical shapes and irrational colours, an alive mad intricately free feel of tree and rock, of movingness and earth, welcome my lonely nostrils ears eyes flesh spirit. Wandering carefully among carpenters masons ditchdiggers (and similar comrades disguised as workmen) we walk the plank to a speakeasylike door — and collide with dismally cheerful citizen who promptly reveals himself as personal friend of that prominent Russian-in-Paris novelist whose (by me personally sent) telegram did not scare up a brother in literature. And now I achieve my first bad break; now, asked the prominent's address, I spontaneously reply Don't know but he's always at the Coupole — words better left un-(said John Boyle) return to create ample sorrow when we consider them comfortably defunct

— nevertheless if not however, am soon speaking with someone whom I immediately liked, someone who perhaps likes me and who certainly enjoys talking French, someone who invites me to a few minutes' conversation quite as if conversation were a perfectly recognized form of derring do;

and Virgil, to his eternal credit I record this, shoves me almost brutally at the conversationally inclined comrade ("see you later: be at my room about six; we'll go to Gahlstook — that means Nectie —" and capping the climax "à bientôt!")

What chiefly interests you? the diminutive president ('tis himself, not a picture) quietly asks, asks almost peacefully. A not big untidy room remarkably buntingless (but Lenin's bust listens just outside). Miscellaneous whisper of implements, how unlike generic machinethunder, seeps through Unshutness. — Would you like to see the vast industrial plants by which Russia is trying to get her place in the world? Russia is striving; a whole race, a vast part of earth . . . — I understand: you are interested in the cultural side. More especially drama? Let me know whenever you want to see a play; I'd be only too delighted to telephone for you, the theatre reserves your seats gladly — and it will cost you nothing. Tomorrow our great writer, Gorky, arrives: may I suggest that you visit the club next day and meet him? Now let me show you our club — as a writer, you're more than welcome here.

(and, astonished, behold — hidden away under ground — positively not depressing rathskeller; may, an almost gay . . . with several almost lively looking customers engaged in almost luxurious gastronomics . . . and someone almost who might be an actress, perhaps because herself wears what might have been (almost and long since) stylish garments, or is it that this comrade doesn't seem to be exactly carrying the woes of a sinful world upon shoulders precisely which were never made for unpleasure . . . and withal an atmosphere of semitranquility, of notuneasiness, almost of something approximating that blessedly aesthetic phenomenon: relaxation)

which bountiful crop of almosts dignifies a not quite terrifying perspective; myself begins-to-begin to almost conjec-

ture that possibly comrade Kem-min-kz has an impossible place in the impossibly possible USSR. Also, how sweet (how proudly purely sweet) is the mother of imagination; courtesy

— Probably that telegram never arrived: I know most of the comrades on this list of yours and I'm sure they'll do everything they can for you. "Venez ici déjeuner, c'est le centre des écrivains" our food is good, the beer I can vouch for. Cigarettes? Of course; over here —

Peacefully returning (proudly, without error) through streetless streets (tranquilly among peopleless people moving) surprise Dante's cicerone in the very act of consulting his mural theatreschedule. Unpresently present is faded Interpreter, who very distinctly wears That Elsewhere Look — times pathetic habit of shifting stance whenever viewed; as if avoiding a wellaimed blow — probably an erstwhile member of the longlost wellborns; anyhow inwardly ashamed of current occupation (whatever it may be). And this dodger 'phones Proletcult, where The Nectie's displayed (Virgil must see The Necktie tonight because he must, because The Necktie won't be shown again, and finally because Virgil's opus requires liberal documentation re proletarian histrionics) winning 3 places (the 3rd, I almost understand, for a distinguished American painter and writer who — luckily for Russia — happens to be in town). Selah. The distinguished, allowed 15 minutes' freedom, hastens to pump halfbaldness anent my not yet arrived worldly goods — hb promises (Russianly, am beginning to understand) profound action; he will even interrogate a highly responsible comrade who departed this hotel in the direction of the outhouseless outhouse at 11 A.M. and is expected back in something very like half an hour, comrade weather permitting . . . ("Can you beat it?") . . . but no sooner am semidesperately upstairs than out respectfully rushes a not quite cheerfulness,

crying Luggage? and pocketing 35 comrade kopecks almost without a comrade murmur. (Horrors Of Trying To Tip A Comrade). Acci- or inci- (or both) dentally my poor old suitcase sprung one noble leak but ("honest thieves") regurgitated nothing; no, not even the means of enjoying singularly painful shave and equally appropriate scrub — therefore, at 6:45 punctually, do I present burnished arms chez Sibyl & Interpreter Inc.

A ponderiferously (And How) YMCA atmosphere, strongly suggesting Nigorel lay (holy image of Ulianov much in evidence) pervades the radiatingly EDuCAtional prommenoir replete with sundry and various And How uplifting exhibits (models of bombing planes, tractors, whatnot; around which cluster curiously silent folk, bigeyed patient clumsy beholders, awed childlike beings) . . . everywhere a mysterious sense of behaving, of housebrokenness, of watch-your-stepism. No Smoking. Benevolently our delegation graces the 2nd row of a rustic rendezvous wriggling with children (including one spontaneous and charming and otherwise noteworthy comrade of 8 or 10) for whom The Necktie might well have been composed — for it's all "funnies", slapstick, hocuspocus (example: a bookcase full of ancient tomes and priceless knickknacks receives a good push; whereupon the whole contraption homogeneously disappears to magically become flat wall) and it culminates in 1 suh-wel Universal Cataclysm Finale (with somebody rushing up the aisle and everything and you know what I mean and Tah-de-ye-ahhh!) — indeed, circa ⅓ through this hugely long foolery, begin to suspect that all the grownupless grownups in Russia are children . . .

Item: during the first of numberless entreactes we invade (by special request) an atomic spicandspanness, more than miraculously into which — at the bidding of a flannelshirted necktieless almost jolly comrade manager(?) and a similarly bedecked modestly straightforward comrade-director(?) —

are forced delicious tea and luscious sweetmeats. Our hosts (brisk but courteous, efficient but sympathetic, in short fine fellows both) beg us to partake of the good cheer and with nothing short of incredible patience answer Vergil's innumerable (sic) questions (the numerable answers being recorded in a Harvard Cooperative Society Harvard Square Cambridge Mass notebook). The recorder is adopted, at intermission number 3, by an Hebraically extracted Little Girl With A Big Heart, who not unrecently left her native New York with the May Day Unit of radicals, never (she announces) to return (Tah-de-ye-ahhh!) — viciously almost whose (almost but, alas, not quite sublimated via propaganda) corporeality responds to sundry and various setting-upexercises in which members of the cast very frequently indulge: a hungrily dreadful specimen, on the whole — and guzzles 4 cakes to dodger's 1 and seems to know more than is good for any 6 comrades (our hosts' dum & dee faces betray no secrets, but their eyes actually smile when comrade mentor, statisticsward bound, checks comrade Unit's illimitable exposition)

— of this particular proletarian fable the Moral, as explained (a) by dodger to angel (b) by angel to me (c) by Unit to dodger, oddly coincides with my ignorant own interpretation, viz. It's not things that matter, comrade, it's how you make use of things that matters: thus even a necktie, that symbol of bourgeois idiocy, may end as nothing less than a proletarian banner waving from loyal matchlock of Comrade Righto while all Our Boys (and Girls AND HOW) go forth to make the whole world one big family. Perhaps — only perhaps — to imagine Life deliberately lifting Itself, by that hypothetical guiltsense which equals Its own bootstraps, out of fatally stupendous unconsciousness into the (how comfortably measurable) tinyness of "humanity" — into a "scientific" infrared-ultraviolet illusion-of-a-future, into an omne-vivum-e-vivo ABC "reality", into a vicariously in-

fantile Kingdom of Slogan — softly is not to misunderstand the message of Proletcult per (come all ye traumdeutungs!) Necktie.

With an especially dodgeless dodge comrade Interpreter abandons us for comrade streetcar (tactfully thereby allowing comrade Unit unmitigated access to benevolence over the Two Good Comrades Together or tastes-in-common route). As for I, announce low craving for brightlights — whereupon Two Good Comrades Together emit mild astonishment and (wrapped in loftier than trivial matters) manoeuvre me several murderful miles to the deathsmelling portals of Hotel Metropole . . .

"Well, I suppose you're tired — I'll take the comrade home . . . don't mention it my dear chap! Let's have breakfast in my room tomorrow — I like so much to breakfast in my pyjamas. But not before ten, eh? Just give me a knock. Gahlstook was wonderful, wasn't it; we'll see The West Is Nervous next. Goodnight, tovarich! — O, remember about correspondents, and — something else I wanted to say . . . well, never mind, I can't seem to think; see you tomorrow!"

Away walked one of earth's queerest couples.

E. E. CUMMINGS

JIM BRIDGER

JIM had a body that one morning took
A long pole in its hands and with a cry
That no one can remember strangely pushed
A hundred springing rivers down to mope
In folds of yellow sleep below St. Louis.
That afternoon the muscles of his body
Threw enough of the Rocky Mountains down so any
Of the oxen could step over them. That night
Jim Bridger's body cooled off in a cornfield
Where some day Kansas City was going to be.

Look at Jim Bridger standing in the cornfield:

What can you say to an old man in the evening
When the Rocky Mountains are coming back around him
Chanting a long blue tomb-song for his body?
What can you say to an old man in the evening,
A blind man standing in a field of corn
With the tap-roots waiting to lace his moccasins
Where Kansas City's going to be? Can you ask him:

"How do you know the moonlight on your hand
Is Idaho? How do you know the wind
Is Colorado coming to cool your armpits
When your arms have reached too far for loneliness?"

They let him ride a plowhorse to the cornfield,
But the horse has gone away and the dog has gone.
Jim Bridger rode Grohean, the Comanche stallion,
But Grohean is dead, he's out there in the mountains.

Do you know how a stallion falls in a water course,
With the neck curved back too flat and the ribs too high?
What can you say to an old man in the evening
When he gets down on his knees to feel the stubble
And feels with his hands the particles of earth
Binding Missouri together under the moon,
Binding Missouri to the members of his mountains?
What can you say when he lies down in the stubble
Staring too long as if his lids were lenses?

Will you remember him, Missouri River,
The boy with starlight on his shaggy head?
Do you remember him, New Mexico,
The shaggy head in the mirror well of Taos?
You, Canada? You, white Mackenzie River?
You grasses and blue flowers rimming the Arctic?
You silver gulls of Utah, flying in
The wake of plows as if the plows were ships?
Nebraska, wooer of rain, will you remember
A cloud like a level rain cloud over two
Horizons and a tall boy moving like
A thunder master into the bison vapor?

You, Colorado, wrinkling out of an old sea,
Into the granite and the orchids and the high wind,
Where do his moccasins slip down hill in the needles?
Montana, when you lie on your back like a woman
Hearing the flutes of the Blackfeet over October,
Do you hear his name among the sorrow bringers?

Wyoming, in the morning when the world
Is turning over like a wheel and the mountains
Are tossing up golden rivers to every ocean,
How do you know which sea to give a river?
Do you remember anyone who told you?

You wide Dakotas, listeners of wind,
Where do the river namers stop at noon
For shady antelope against their tongues
With fifty songs to go into the sunset?

Sometimes, when I've quarreled a long time with Jim Bridger
For lying dead too long under a cornfield,
And never leaving the cornfield like a myth
That will not stay in any place too long,
I say: "Jim, you're ten consonants and vowels,
You're only the name of a lake in the Yellowstone,
And something the postmaster knows in the Clark's Fork
Valley."

But I know why Jim will never rise from the cornfield
And walk a thousand miles to wake his stallion.

For I know how hard it would be to make a myth
When I hear Wyoming singing to the seven reeds
That quiver on a turbo-generator's breast . . .
When I write an advertisement and believe it
And watch the people believing my advertisement . . .
When I hear a city rocking at night to the same song,
Every night the same song, always the same song.
And I know why Jim will never stalk the moon
When I listen to people buying automobiles,
And what they say when they finger a fender curve,
When I listen to some of the things they talk about
Before they build high buildings and afterward
When they look up out of their windows at high buildings;
And I know why old Jim Bridger in the cornfield
Will always stay there until he isn't there.

So much for old Jim Bridger, but if you ask me
Where am I going on a summer day,

I'll tell you I am gathering instruments
About me like the seven reeds that quiver
On a turbo-generator's breast.
I'll tell you I am going to crack it out
From Denver to Taos, figuring about
An hour for a sandwich over Raton Pass.
I'll be in Castle Rock in thirty minutes
Which I would say was more than old Jim Bridger
Could make in a long day riding any stallion;
It will be dark from Cimmaron to Taos,
And I'll be tired enough to feel
Some of the instruments slipping away:
I'll feel the wheel dissolving in my hands,
And I won't be knowing about the brakes and throttle,
And the same song that makes the cities rock together
Will be moving through my fingers and the spruces,
But I won't know there's music in my fingers;
I'll be a slow thing moving into Taos,
Slow as Jim Bridger on a weary stallion;
But when I get to Taos I'll start over,
I'll feel the instruments and they will feel
Like something waiting for me in a cornfield.

THOMAS HORNSBY FERRIL

BOCK BEER AND BERMUDA ONIONS

THE Indians come in on a late Sunday afternoon and they leave on the following Thursday. The weather is turning gradually from Winter into Spring. There are a great many guests at the farm, some planning to stay through the Spring into the Summer, and a few who have come down from the city for the week-end. The bedrooms are crowded and disturbed until the house looks like a hotel, and Amy is tired of being a hostess to so many people. From her bedroom she can hear them playing the gramophone and shouting out their card numbers. When the Indians come in she is sitting alone in her bedroom looking out of the window into the gardens.

They come and go with incredible rapidity and quiet. No one knows who they are when they come and they know less when they have gone. While they are camped in the meadow the weather completes a final change. The air is sweet and unlocked. The gardens and the fields go finally green. The river is so high with the thaw that it cannot be any higher. The sky is sky. The trees are trees. Amy sits

alone in her bedroom rocking back and forth in her chair. She will have her forty-fifth birthday on the second of April. It is still March, but the warm wind makes April very near. She gets up and looks at herself in the mirror and counts her wrinkles. Then she sits down again and rocks back and forth looking out of the window and thinking about her age. It is impossible to comprehend forty-five Springs, and the forty-fifth will be as much of a failure as the others. One can lose a husband in the war she is thinking, and open a house in the country and spend on thirty guests the substance one would have given to a husband. But a house full of guests and memory crowded with Spring only makes the sum of her, flesh, blood, wrinkles, hair, a more final object to go up against April. She is aware of the ticking of every clock, the dripping of every gutter. She is aware of the passing of day and light, morning, afternoon, the confusion of twilight, evening. She is aware of the Spring and the changes in the season. There is a swift ripple of green, fashioned from wheat between the two vegetable gardens. A terrible green that has trickled into the landscape like cold water. The river is full. The rains will be warm and bitter hammering at the tin roof. And she cannot hold this back. Her hands are fleshless and nervous, strident with strange energy. She cannot put them up and make it ageless and changeless and Winter forever. She cannot hold this back with her hands any more than she can dam a cataract or a great wave.

Five people are playing lotto in the drawing room. Mrs. White, her daughter, Rachel, Peter. Someone in the dining room is playing one of the gramophone records. It is an old record warped and distorted with use. The music comes out in bunches, the voice trembles and sings. A thin voice with a shallow throat that seems to be choked way forward in the mouth. The trombones flower and blare. The beat is rapid, swifter than the falling of water. Amy taps her feet on the floor in time to the music and thinks about her forty-

fifth April and the great symbol and seal of Spring as Bock beer and Bermuda onions. She can hear Rachel laugh and beat the card table. Mrs. White's short-postured laughter. Peter's growling. Rachel stamps the floor and beats the card table, this time overcome with laughter.

Then a big maroon sedan comes up the driveway and parks by the front door. Two men get out of the car and walk over the lawn to the steps. Rachel gets up from the card table and meets them at the door.

— Hello, she says. Is there anything I can do for you?

The men look her over. One of them wears a gaudy necktie as lurid and terrible as metal.

— We want to see Mrs. Henderson, he says.

Rachel goes out of the room into the corridor and shouts up the stairwell. Amy comes out of her bedroom and walks down the staircase. She moves proudly and nervously across the room to the two men standing in the door frame against the twilight. They are both dark with black empty eyes and thin, pinched faces, either Mexican or American Indians.

— Hello. Amy laughs and wraps her jacket around her.

— Are you Mrs. Henderson?

— Why yes. She laughs again.

— We asked at the store, the first one says, and they said you have a large meadow where we could camp if we would pay you rent. We are a tribe of Cherokee Indians. There are twenty of us. We have our tents, and all we will do will be to camp in the meadow. This man is the chief. His name is Mario.

The second man steps forward. He is dark and slow with a strange coolness to his person. He speaks in careful broken English:

— I am the chief. We will be very clean. We will only stay one week and we will pay you five dollars. We will not leave any papers and we will be careful of our fire.

Amy laughs again.

— But I don't know anything about you, she says. This is a private farm. Will you make much noise? Will you guarantee me the five dollars? The first man speaks again. The chief puts a stick of gum in his mouth and chews rapidly.

— We are Cherokee Indians from a government reservation in Oklahoma. We will pay you five dollars in the middle of the week. We are very quiet.

Amy turns and looks at the other people in the room. Then she shrugs her shoulders and ends her sentence in a question.

— All right. You can stay. But don't camp beyond the fence. She turns around and walks over to the card table. The two Indians go down the front staircase without speaking to one another. It is getting dark. The twilight changes and turns with the security of a merry-go-round coming to a halt. Amy puts on a sweater and walks back and forth in the room talking to the people who are playing cards. We will have Indians at the farm too, she says. Maybe they will do war dances and paint their faces for us. I think that they must be a hoax. What would Indians be doing in this part of the country in the Spring? They are probably very shrewd gypsies. But we have had everything, why shouldn't we have Indians.

Within an hour four cars drive up and park in the meadow. Six tents are lifted and a fire is built. Amy stands on the verandah watching the small fire fastened between the two hills. She watches the forms shift closely around the flame, black padded movements, elegant, silent gestures. She cannot hear them talk. Only the sound of the women's bass laughter. The evening air is warm. The curtains are flapping. All she can think of is Bock beer and Bermuda onions.

There is a strange forgotten blood bond between these two exact types of Americans. The influence of the landscape is secret and beyond control. The first have erected their tents on the soil between the hills. The second have built these strange white farmhouses that look like deflowered temples

in a violated wilderness. And it is with this half interest that Amy goes down to the camp fire with her guests, to question and examine the Indians.

The first impulse is to hate them for their control and quiet and pride. At first because of the women's costumes, the exactness of gesture, the warmth of their language, Amy and her guests carry on a deliberate unspoken warfare of hate and indifference. But the Indians are very convincing as Indians and they can weave flowers out of straw and roll cigarettes with one hand and do tribal dances and sing songs if they are given gin in payment. When the first impulsive indifference has been spent, Amy and her guests sit down at the camp fire among the Indians and ask and answer questions. The chief tells them that they are traveling around northern New York and New England. They will do this until Autumn, when they go back to Oklahoma. Amy explains her existence. The facts that she is childless, that her husband was lost in the war, that she lives alone on this farm with a shifting mass of friends to defend her from loneliness. The Indians are interested in her aloneness and want to know how much she will sell the farm for, and are the floors in good condition. They quibble with one another over the condition of the floors.

There is an older man in the group, who drinks too much and then laments the passing of his race. His face has sagged, his eyes are loose and heavy. When Amy brings him a half a pint of gin and a package of cigarettes he tells them the myth of creation. The other Indians watch him and tolerate him with a quiet patience. The women are stout and smooth like a type of southern Jew. They wear great muslin skirts of lilac and yellow that hang to the ground. Their breasts and blouses are ornamented with coins and pendant drips of imitation gold and silver. While the old man tells the myth they lean close to the flame, their jewelry rattles, they talk to one another in simple bunches of language. The myth is great, but

it is imperfectly told by this half-intoxicated Indian. The greatness has become incidental. It is something of incredible weight being passed carelessly from tongue to tongue. The old man's face is draped and toothless, pinched up with gin. But while he talks an inner brilliance is imposed on his features. He can remember his own superiority, his secret faith in the Messiah of the feathered serpent locked between the waves of a lake and yet greater than all the lakes in America, than all the lakes and rivers and mountains. The great feathered serpent locked between soil and water, deathless and terrible, more terrible than the sum of all the soil and water that shelters him.

The old man tips the gin bottle up to his lips and then pushes it down again into the warm spring soil. When he talks he rocks back and forth. He belches and fumbles with his cigarette and tries to summon words and phrases out of his memory. The other Indians talk among themselves all the time. Talk and chew gum and light cigarettes.

> In the beginning it was all ocean with nothing but a high place. The animals lived in the high place and there were many and it was crowded. They sent the beaver down onto the water and he discovered mud which he brought to the surface. The mud grew and spread until it formed an island. Later the island was fastened to the sky by four great cords. The sky is a vault of stone.
>
> In the beginning the world was soft and then it quickened and grew firm. Birds were sent down to see if the world were firm enough to hold the animals. They came back and said that the world was still too soft. The great buzzard was sent down from heaven and he flew near to the earth. When his wings touched the soil they beat up mountains and he was recalled to heaven. We were afraid it would all be mountains.
>
> Then the earth became firm and the animals de-

scended onto the earth. The animals lived among the mountains of the earth.

There is a second world within this world. The seasons are different and the light and darkness is different. Our springs and rivers are the same and the sources and the endings of our springs and brooks go and come from the inner world. These springs are the doorways, and to enter the doorways it is necessary to go without food and to be much of the inner world. The seasons of the inner world are different and the heat and cold and light and darkness are different. We know this because in our cold seasons the fresh water from the springs is warm and in the warm seasons it is cold. Within each of us there is also an inner world and within the plants and the animals. There are different seasons when our blood is hot and cold.

When the plants were created we were told to stay awake for seven days and seven nights. We tried, but we fell asleep and so we did not see the creation of the plants. Only the owl and the panther were awake and they were the only ones to see the creation. The plants are also connected with the inner world and within them there is a part of the inner world. Their roots are entrances to the inner world.

The earth is an island set in the middle of a great ocean suspended by four cords from heaven. Heaven is carved from one block of solid rock. When man dries up and the inner world perishes the earth will shrink and the cords will break and the world will go down again into the water. We are afraid of this.

When the myth is over the old man belches and drains the last of his gin out of the bottle. The other Indians talk among themselves and the chief's wife makes coffee in a large white pot and serves it in elegant demi-tasse cups with gold rims and gilt inscriptions. The chief's wife makes everyone drink

two cups of coffee and then she sits down and smokes a borrowed cigarette. She tells Amy all about how the girls go to school and learn to be librarians in the Indian libraries and how lazy the men are and that they do not work.

III

The break occurs on Thursday afternoon between lunch and dinner. Among the people at the farm there is a young girl who has come down with her mother to spend a week with Amy. She is short and blonde with heavy drooping eyelids, and when she speaks she lifts her face as though to shake back her eyelids and speak up from under her eyes.

It is late afternoon. There are a number of people sitting in the main drawing room smoking and reading. Amy is up stairs working on the typewriter, and the noise comes down into the room like artificial thunder. Suddenly this young girl runs up from the river bank, onto the verandah and into the drawing room. Her hair is shaken and loose. Her dress is rumpled. She runs into the drawing room. Her mother is sitting in a chair in the corner. The young girl runs to her and begins to weep convulsively and to beat her head on her mother's breast. She will not talk. They do not know what has happened. Her mother takes her upstairs to the bathroom and washes her face and tries to find out what is the matter.

It was after lunch when it happened. The young girl was walking down by the river. She met the chief on the other side of the bridge. He held her and struggled with her and kissed her. She screamed and beat her fists at him. He took down his trousers and finally she escaped. This is all she can say. Everyone's curiosity is immediately directed to what actually happened. The girl is unable to say. For the rest of the evening she lies on a couch in the drawing room, her face to the wall, sobbing. Amy and her mother consult one another. The young girl is nervous and neurotic and it may

be all imagination. While they are in consultation the spokesman of the tribe comes up to the front door bearing under his arm a piece of stove pipe that he borrowed early in the week. He asks for Amy. She crosses the room and meets him at the door again.

— We are leaving tonight, he says.

— Oh yes. Amy's words are high and empty in the air. She laughs and tells him to put the stove pipe in the barn.

— Business is no good, he says. We are going down to Salbury where there is a roller coaster and a merry-go-round. Here is your money. He hands her a five-dollar bill. She takes it and crumples it up in her jacket pocket.

— Well goodbye, she says. She turns around and comes back into the room. He leaves the stove pipe standing by the front door and returns to the meadow. Within twenty minutes the tents are taken down and the cars go out of the driveway. The meadow is empty. Around the ashes of the camp fire there is a circle of condensed milk tins, candy tinsel, coffee tins, soup tins, paper bags, fruit peelings. The young girl is still in the drawing room, her face to the wall. They tell her that the Indians have gone. They ask her what happened. She answers in a heavy petulant voice.

— In the name of Christ can't you leave me alone. I don't know what happened I tell you, I don't know.

That evening Amy picks up the first impulse of hate and indifference again. They were not real Indians. They were shrewd European gypsies. They had probably picked up the myths and the war dances from books in the public library. There would undoubtedly be a lot of money in the business of becoming primitive Indians for the amusement of civilized Americans. Amy walks back and forth on the verandah looking up at the sticky sweet Spring stars. Rachel winds the gramophone, and Amy can hear the thumping of the springs. Then Rachel starts the record. The same record. The repetition is inevitable and pretentious like a miniature doom.

The trumpets stem out and flower. The choked shallow voice sings the same explosive words. You can see her standing on the front of the stage. Walking back and forth on the stage shooting out her abrupt smart buttox.

Ah need lovin'
That's what ah crave
Ah need lovin'
Ah can't behave

The chorus girls are standing at the footlights. Shaking, vibrating, their hands trembling above their heads.

Sweet-sixteen-and-never-been-kissed
Comeon-show-me-what-I've-missed

Amy walks back and forth on the verandah, smelling the soiled Spring air, wondering how she is going to pay out the long mornings, the brief evenings of Spring and Summer. Wondering if lilacs are as fabulous and purple as she remembers. All she can think of is Bock beer and Bermuda onions. They will have to clean the meadow out and throw away the tin cans. The river may be high this Spring, high enough to flood the vegetable gardens.

JON CHEEVER

LESS LOVE THAN EACHNESS

LESS love
than eachness clinging to the sill of sense,
less unity than choice:
tight finger to finger
eye to grave eye,
this perpetual greeting
the tide-rip at the meeting
of the tide and stream.

And so I asked little at first
of the beauty I had chosen;
prayers are not granted
them that ask but them that thirst
though all the estuary of the mind
flow up with hot salt springs
and blind.

Now in the dark of time
so much grows in me through the ground
is drinking me and drunken,
given and being given shrunken,
I cannot render
the final spasm of surrender,
but with the world go round and round,
eternal tide-rip of our greeting,
lubricious slime.

R. P. Blackmur

BENEATH A STILL SKY

IT WAS not very warm, but the long slopes of grass looked weary. The sky was still, and held a blueness which could hardly be. The white hens cupped their breasts in the loose brown dust and were silent. She stood and stared, the cool, flat steel of the windmill blandly cold against her forehead. Beneath her ribs pressed a heaviness which she could not shake off. With her left hand she felt the fingers of the right. They were warm and moist. The two young bulls looked at her with wide, immobile eyes. The heaviness and silence of everything was so great that she turned around hurriedly, almost hoping that wild, swift things would flit off into the sky, but everything was fixed and motionless, and only two blue doves sheened lazily in the sun, on the barn top.

She had left the house when the warm odor of the spruces had come to her nostrils, through the open screen door, when Nellie had gravely folded the fifth white sheet. She had to stir. When she rose, the drowsy hound lifted his head halfway, but dropped it at once again, shaking his loose brown ears. To Nellie she said, "I'm going to look around a bit outside," and Nellie, folding a blue lunch cloth, answered, "All right." Then she had come here to the foot of the windmill. She looked at the two doves. A killdeer called once, and a small group of leaves twirled on the aspen and stilled again.

Her thoughts came and turned again and again on the same things. She could not shake them loose. The loneness of

the farmyard seemed to surge up to her throat, and against her eyes. She closed her eyes and listened. But she thought she could hear the breathing of the little bulls, and a little frantically she opened the eyes again and turned around. They still stared at her with somber eyes, their heads lowered a little, as if the blue sky were too heavy for their short necks.

Seven weeks had passed since she had come. The first were lost in the novelty of everything. But then late spring passed away with the silencing of orioles, and only the farmhouse and its trees remained, a core in a lonely disc of stillness. But, there was Nellie. George had been good to give her Nellie. She knew that now, even though she had not asked for a girl, because somewhere she had been told it was not done on the farm, and also she was not certain that George could afford it. George had been good, but George was different. Every day, after she had pealed the shrill bell, she stood by the gate to watch him come past the huckleberry swamp, behind the heads of his huge brown horses. He was red-armed, and the sun had bleached his hair. One hot noon, when the sun made everything scintillate and shiver, she said to herself, "Only a very small part of him belongs to me, the rest belongs to the earth." She had startled, as if someone had said these words close to her mouth, someone in flight, who was now lost to the earth. It had frightened her, and impatiently she had pushed the heavy gate open, smarting her chin against the top board. And when George had passed through, behind his huge horses, he had bent his red face a little from the height of the wagon, and had shouted from his dust-darkened lips, "That 'se baby." To her. She stood and stared, and with a voice raucous, nearly like a man's, she had shouted to him, "You tell 'em." But, something had ended right then, and when the jangling of the horses' harness grew still, she was certain something else had stilled and had become dead in the wide, still heat. Slowly she had followed George into the house, many steps behind him, and he had not waited for her

at the door, but had walked on into the darkness of the house.

Since that noon she had not been at the gate again. Very earnestly she had questioned Nellie about different things about the farm, but Nellie, used to the farm, had explained in awkward monosyllables, and had never stopped her work when she answered. One afternoon she set tea, and when everything was ready she called Nellie and told her to stop her work and have tea with her. Nellie came slowly and awkwardly, and laid her red arms on her lap. They talked a little about housework, the milking, the chickens, and when she had urged Nellie to drink her tea, the girl had gulped it down hastily, and was ready to rise to return to her work again. She said, "But you'll have another cup, won't you?" Nellie settled back and said, "I don't care if I do," and waited. They talked a little again. She had wanted to ask Nellie about the big farm boy who came to get her every Thursday evening in his new Ford, but she hadn't dared. Suddenly she had become aware again that they were silent. Uninterested, she turned the pages of a poultry magazine, which had been on the table in front of her. A little later Nellie rose silently, and was soon after clattering among the dishes in the kitchen again.

She grew very lonely beneath the moveless windmill. Three sparrows fought in a dead lilac, and from somewhere, someone shouted to horses. Someone was beneath the clear sky to shout words. Perhaps it was only a voice, disembodied, drifted from miles away. She listened again, but for the drone of a large yellow bee everything was silent again. She lifted her head and looked up along the slender steel rafters of the windmill, and laid her hand on the rung of the steel ladder just above her head. She hesitated very shortly. Then she started to climb the ladder. It shook a little, and the narrow rungs hurt the inside of her hands, but steadily she climbed higher, first above the roof of the henhouse, then above the aspen, then even above the broad green heap of the maples.

She thought no longer, but went on up. She reached the large, grey blue vane and stopped. There she was, far above everything. A slow breeze flagged her dress and brushed coolly around her ankles. Her hair floated slowly over her temples and into her eyes. With one hand she brushed it away.

All around lay the green day, silent and lonely. Beneath her huddled the house among the spruces and maples, like an old animal squatted in sleep. Again she heard the shouting to horses, and suddenly behind the ledge she saw a horse's head shake upward and disappear again. She waited to see it again, but nothing came. Blocks of paling wheat, and blue-green corn, lay everywhere. Not far away was the Tilson farmhouse, with one window above the foliage, like a wide, lidless eye, which watched something which she could not see. She looked at it. A white cat crossed a path and was lost in the purple alfalfa. Then, beyond the house she saw a road, very thin and grey, like a long, dried timothy stalk. Along it crept a car, then another, and still another. She started to count them. There were seven. "Seven cars," she muttered to herself. Seven moving cars on a green flat earth. It did her no good to be up there. Again the horse's head lifted above the ledge and was gone. Then came a man's raw shout.

And then, slowly, without color, a large bird lifted above the green of the swamp, drifted on slow wings upward, and toward her. Gradually its huelessness became color, and between the wide, grave waft of wings she saw a body and a head. It was a heron. Solemnly it floated past her, away again in the endless still blue. She only looked at the heron now. Soon it too would be swallowed by the trees that limned the horizon. That slow, bar of heaviness pressed under her ribs again, and her throat filled, as with dry dust. The heron still wavered, hueless again.

The screen door banged. She listened. Then came Nellie's voice with a frightened shriek. "Why, Miss Whalen. Why, you're going to break your neck. Why, of all things."

She opened her eyes and looked down upon Nellie, who clutched a broom and stared up with a distorted face. She lowered her foot and started to descend. "I'm coming down, Nellie," she called. She went down a few rungs and looked at Nellie again and waved. "I'll be down in a minute." She laughed loudly and clearly, and saw that the bulls were watching her descend.

Then she stood on earth again. Nellie still waited with her broom beside her and said, "Why, of all things," over and over again, as if she had memorized those words and no more.

She looked at Nellie and laughed nervously. "I had to see things move," she explained.

Nellie looked at her and shook her broad face slowly. "Why, Miss Whalen you . . . Why, of all things," she faltered and stood and stared.

"It's all right, Nellie." She brushed her hands together. They hurt from the strain. Suddenly she said, "Come on, let's go in."

But by the house was the scent of the spruces, and on the other side of the screen door the hound flapped his tail silently. She paused and looked at the dog, her hand on the screen door.

"What do people do here anyway for amusement?" she asked Nellie abruptly.

Nellie stared. "You could go visiting," she said.

She nodded her head, "That's right, I could." She brushed her hands along her dress. "And it's about time I see the neighbors. Tilson's isn't far."

"No," said Nellie.

She turned away from the door and walked down the path. Nellie watched her leave, opened the screen door, let it slam against the dog's head, and shuffled inside. A young rooster stretched its neck to crow, and failed after one guttural note. Then all was silent again, with a small grass snake gliding through the plantain leaves, and a swallowtail

winging loosely above the only foxglove that bloomed.

When she heard Nellie slam the screen door, she slackened her steps a little. Again she looked in the mailbox, knowing that the mail came only once a day, but she hoped that she had missed something that morning. The road was powdery white with dust, which floated over her shoes and around her ankles. No cars would come that way she knew, till five o'clock, unless someone lost the way and took the wrong road. Two big black crows crossed it and recrossed it, and seven male cowbirds fluted at one grey female on the lone telephone wire.

She hurried across the road, and decided to reach the Tilson place through the alfalfa field. Someone called to horses again. She took the first step in the alfalfa gingerly. Small bees and glittering flies hummed from the purple blossoms, on to other purple blossoms, and grasshoppers darted off on crackling wings. She had not imagined that the plants were so high, but when she stooped a little, the blossoms brushed her fingertips. But when she tried it again, a lean caterpillar, with strange tufts of hair along its back, clung to the back of her hand. Hastily she shook it off and hurried on. She was not going to think any longer, but she would walk and walk, her thoughts only on blossoms and insects. She looked around and saw that she was alone in a field of purple blossoms and green leaves. She was alone with insects. Then suddenly a cow lowed a dark, groaning bellow into the still afternoon. She hurried again.

Somewhere in these purple tangles was also the white cat, which she had seen from the windmill. There might be other things. She ran and let her feet fall heavily on the soft ground, so that anything that might be beneath them would be crushed to death. Near the old stump fence she stopped and wiped her temples with her handkerchief.

She walked along the fence and looked for a place where she could climb over it. On the other side was the grass-

grown lane, which led to the Tilson barnyard. In the lane sat the cat, studying the sky. "Kitty, kitty," she called. The cat shut his eyes to slits, then opened them wide to orange-green balls, pale in the sun. "Kitty, kitty," she called again. The cat rose and ran away slowly down the lane. Gradually he ran faster, but then he suddenly stopped and faced her again. She saw a spot without brambles and bushes, and carefully she climbed over the loose fence, after she had looked closely for spiders. She looked for the cat again, but he was no longer in the lane. Something white moved furtively through the pink mallows. She laughed a little. Then the sumach at her side rustled, and a black mullein stalk crackled. She looked aside, and her lips parted, but no sound came through them. Very clearly she heard the man's voice to the horses again, but mutely she stared at the figure among the sumachs.

Uncertainly, with her voice at too high a pitch, she said, "Why, hello." She watched the boy and hesitated. Suddenly, she remembered she had heard about the imbecile child of the Tilson's. He stared at her, his loose lips open, while saliva stringed from his chin to the sumach leaves. She shuddered a little. Again she said, "Hello."

He grinned at her with large decayed teeth and tittered. "Hello," he said, with the same intonation she had used, and took a step forward. She stepped aside.

The sun lay on his clammy yellow skin, and his hair dangled lankly over his forehead. The impotent hands shook from loose arms. He had been eating raspberries, because there was seedy juice on the down of his chin. Repugnance seized her, and at each ape-like lunge of his shoulders, she stepped aside a little. His smile creased into a tremulous half-arch of lips, and he too stopped and pointed an unwashed hand at her.

"You know, this is weather for corn, but if it don't rain everything is going wrong." His words sounded like the

husky chatter of a big fowl. He looked toward the east and pointed with a red-spattered finger. "Everything is going wrong," he repeated mournfully.

She pressed her hands against her ribs and looked at him. "Yes," she said huskily.

"Everything is going wrong," he repeated. "Isn't it?" he demanded suddenly, and laughed weakly.

She nodded her head and said, "Yes, everything." She stepped aside to pass him. "I must hurry," she said brusquely. She tried to hurry past him, but he stepped in her way.

"Everything is going wrong," he repeated tonelessly. Then he reached out his hand. "I'm going too," he said.

She shook her arm frantically. "No you're not."

His hand slid wet and hot over her wrist, and she shook it off. "Don't do that," she whispered hoarsely.

Again she tried to pass him, and again his hand grabbed her wrist. "I'm going too," he said.

Desperately she plucked at his shirt with her free hand and pushed him. He tumbled back limply into the tall grass and the sumach leaves, and landed on his back, his eyes shut. She gasped and thrust her knuckles between her teeth. With his eyes shut he started to laugh at her, a high, cackling, hen-like laughter. She turned around and started to run along the ruts to the farmhouse. She passed the white cat who looked at her solemnly, and a big grey goose scampered from the grass and shuddered ahead of her. By the first barn she stopped and looked back. She could not see him, but when she listened she heard his hen-like laughter from the sumachs.

She walked past the barns toward the front of the house. Huge pigs rose from dribbling dirt and stared at her with hazy eyes, and grunted. She hurried past them. Five geese came and waddled behind her. She could hear the flapping of their webbed feet on the hard path. Otherwise everything was still beneath the maples. She stopped and looked for the

door. The geese also stopped behind her. Nothing stirred behind the black windows of the unpainted house. With some misgiving she went to the door, over the creaking porch. There was no bell, and she peered inside through the open doorway, but everything was still and dark there, except an old clock which tocked thickly. She knocked. Nobody came.

She went down the steps again, and the geese shifted to let her pass. Then she walked toward the back of the house, and they followed again.

When she turned the corner of the house, she saw Mrs. Tilson on the little back porch. She stopped to greet her, but held back her words. The geese had also stopped. Mrs. Tilson was sleeping.

The geese lifted their necks expectantly to her, but she stood still and looked at Mrs. Tilson. The woman's large red hands rested heavily on the potato peelings in her lap and her heavy legs were sprawled far apart. Her swollen head dangled awkwardly over the side of the old rocker, and her thick lips moved fishlike when she breathed. A small spider made a leisurely descent from her black hair to the porch floor. Still she stood and stared at her neighbor. The geese also waited. Over the fence an old blind horse lowered his head and remained so. His eyes were milky white, and his nostrils dilated rhythmically as if he sensed that she was there.

Still she hesitated. Then footsteps shuffled behind her, and she heard the hen-like laugh. She ran away, past the sleeping woman and past the blind horse. The geese did not follow now and she did not look back again. She ran into the land and hurried over the fence again. The grasshoppers spattered away from her as she ran through the timothy and later through alfalfa.

When she reached the roadside she sat down among the mallows and cupped her chin in her hands. She wept a little. Then she brushed her tears away and sat there and thought. No one was on the road. Even the crows had left.

Finally she rose and walked along the road to her house. The warm scent of the spruces came to her nostrils. Morosely she stared at the shriveled lilac blossoms at the entrance of the path. They too had deceived her, blooming lushly and odorously when she had come. She looked at the shriveled and blackened blossoms again and walked into the driveway.

She remembered that the phlox were in full bloom in the flower garden, where large red and white clumps swayed lightly above the hedge. She walked toward the garden. But then she saw one bloom shake convulsively, and when she came closer and looked over the privet hedge, she saw that the pullets had invaded the garden again and were scratching and dusting among the flowers. An uncontrollable rage seized her. It was an old garden full of large, bright flowers, and the only thing she still liked about the farm. She pressed her teeth together in rage, picked up a long dead branch which lay at her feet and rushed at the pullets.

They scattered cackling. One white rooster was near her. She lifted the stick to strike him, but it snapped and broke off close to her hand. The rooster scurried away, and she followed him. The frantic bird ran against the fence and she nearly caught him, but he slipped past her and ran through the flower garden. She ran after him, wildly, treading on the flowers. Her lips puckered against her teeth. The rooster ran to the front of the house, and she followed close upon him. Her breath came sore and hard, but still she ran. Three times they ran around the house. The rooster had become silent and started to falter as he ran. Finally he huddled against the fence, too tired to go on. She nearly fell on top of him. With both hands she clutched his body. But when she felt the warm, smooth feathers, and the pulsing shake of the body she calmed a little. Her sides ached, but a strange thrill passed over her, when she felt the wildly beating heart against her fingers. Slowly she lifted the animal from the ground and

held it loosely between her hands. His breast cupped softly against her fingertips, and his restless brown eyes blinked. She laughed bitterly, and shook, and the rooster shook in her hands.

Suddenly she was aware that George stood behind her. She stopped her laughter and waited.

"Ellen, what is the matter?" he demanded.

She faced him, still holding the rooster. "Nothing." She shrugged her shoulders. "Not a thing."

He reached out his hands to take the rooster from her, but she stepped back. "What is the matter?" he urged.

"Not a thing." She started to laugh again.

"Nellie came and called me, and said there was something wrong," he continued awkwardly.

She stared at the rooster in her hands, and half aloud she repeated the imbecile's phrase, "Everything is wrong."

"What?" he tried to take the rooster again.

But suddenly she laughed again. "Here." She thrust the rooster into his hands.

"But Ellen, what did you do?" He pressed the fowl against his chest and stared at her.

"I?" She laughed grimly and met his eyes. "I went visiting, that's all. That is absolutely all." She dragged the last words slowly.

He looked at her.

Suddenly she turned and walked toward the door. "Why don't you go back to work?" she shouted.

The screen door slammed behind her. He watched her disappear into the darkness of the house. The rooster rested warm against his chin. Unconsciously he rubbed his chin gently over the bird's smooth neck. Then he stooped and lowered it to the grass. He shrugged his shoulders and walked toward the pasture. The white rooster scampered through the burdock leaves, and everything was silent again.

David Cornel DeJong

THE PROBLEM OF CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY

THERE is no expression that comes more naturally to the mind of an historian of medieval philosophy than that of Christian philosophy. There is none, it seems, that could raise fewer difficulties, and therefore we should scarcely be astonished to see it so frequently in use. Meantime, there are few which on reflection prove to be more obscure and difficult to define. The question is not, indeed, to know whether an historian of medieval thought has the right to consider the philosophy built by the Christians, during the middle ages, apart from those that were the product of Jewish and Mohammedan thought. From this point of view, the problem is purely historical and can be easily solved. But strictly speaking, we cannot isolate in history what existed as a unity in reality. Since we know that Christian, Jewish and Mohammedan thought have influenced one another, it would be a mistaken method to study them as so many closed and isolated systems. In fact, historical research lives on abstractions and each one of us marks for himself a sphere of activity whose frontiers are those

of his competence. But it is important for us to believe that the limitations of our method are not the limits of reality.

The true problem does not lie in that direction; it is of a philosophical character, and considerably more serious. In its lowest terms, the problem consists in asking whether the notion itself of a *Christian philosophy* has any meaning, and, secondarily, whether it corresponds to a certain reality? Naturally, it is not a question of knowing whether there have been Christians who were philosophers, but rather whether Christian philosophers are possible. With such an interpretation, the problem would be asked in the same way with reference to Mohammedans and to Jews. Everyone knows that medieval civilization is characterized by the extraordinary eminence which the religious element has in it. Likewise, everyone knows that Judaism, Mohammedanism and Christianity produced at that time bodies of doctrines in which philosophy was combined more or less harmoniously with religious dogma, and that this combination has been given the rather vague title of scholasticism. The question precisely is to know whether these forms of scholasticism, be they Jewish, Mohammedan or, more particularly, Christian, merit the name of philosophies. Now, just as soon as we formulate the problem in these terms, far from appearing evident, the existence and even the possibility of a Christian philosophy becomes problematical, and this to such a degree that today there seems to be agreement in the most opposed schools of philosophy in refusing any positive meaning to this expression.

It is opposed, first of all, by the criticism of historians, who, without discussing *à priori* the question of knowing whether or not a *Christian philosophy* is possible, accept as a fact that during the middle ages it never existed. Fragments of Greek doctrines more or less awkwardly grafted to a theology: that is almost all that Christian thinkers have bequeathed

to us. They borrow from Plato and Aristotle indiscriminately, and, what is worse, even try to unite them in an impossible synthesis and, as John of Salisbury already pointed out in the twelfth century, to reconcile those dead who were never in agreement while they were alive. No one has ever witnessed the progress of a thought which is at the same time fundamentally Christian and truly creative. Christianity, therefore, has made no contribution towards enriching in any way the philosophical heritage of humanity.

The fact which the historians believe to be true is explained by the philosophers. If there has never been a Christian philosophy observable in history, the reason is that the idea itself is contradictory and impossible. Foremost among those who share in this opinion are to be placed those who can be called the pure rationalists. Their position is so well known that it would be hardly useful to describe it, were it not that its influence has extended much farther than is commonly supposed. For them there exists between religion and philosophy an essential difference which renders any collaboration whatever between them ultimately impossible. All are not agreed on the essence of religion, quite the contrary, but all are agreed in affirming that it does not belong to the order of reason, and that reason in its turn could not derive from the order of religion. Now, the order of reason is precisely that of philosophy. Philosophy, therefore, is essentially independent of everything except itself and particularly of that irrational thing called Revelation. No one to-day would dream of speaking of a Christian mathematics, or of a Christian biology, or of a Christian medicine. Why? Because mathematics, biology and medicine are sciences, and because science is radically independent of religion in its conclusions as well as in its principles. The expression, Christian philosophy, which is used, in the meantime, is no less absurd, and the only thing to do is to abandon it.

It is needless to say that in our own day not one neo-Scholastic philosopher could be found who would admit that there is no relation between philosophy and religion. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to think that an absolute opposition separates all of them from rationalism as it has just been described. On the contrary, although they maintain expressly on another level the existence of necessary relations between philosophy and religion, some among them admit the premises of the rationalistic argument and some even have the courage to accept its conclusion. What these neo-Scholastics deny is that no Christian thinker has succeeded in constructing a philosophy, for they affirm that St. Thomas Aquinas has established one; but only a little insistence would be necessary to make them admit that the philosophy of St. Thomas is the only one, and that if it is the only one the reason precisely is that it is constructed on a purely rational level. The disagreement, therefore, which separates them from the rationalists is much more a disagreement on facts rather than on principles, or, if there is a disagreement on principles among them, it does not refer to the very notion of philosophy, but to the place which belongs to philosophy in the hierarchy of sciences. While the pure rationalist places philosophy at the top and identifies it with wisdom, the neo-Scholastic subordinates it to theology which alone fully deserves the name of wisdom; but why do certain neo-Scholastics think that their philosophy, even when it is subordinated to theology, remains identical in nature with that philosophy which recognizes no Wisdom above it? How is such an attitude to be explained?

Were one able to ask the thinkers of the middle ages what right they claimed to the title of philosophers, one would receive very different replies. First of all, some of them no doubt would answer that such a title does not interest them at all, because they have another title, that of Christians, which is sufficient. In defense of this position, such deter-

mined opponents of dialectic as St. Bernard or St. Peter Damiani could be cited, but even apart from these extreme cases, the Averroists are the only ones who will be found to admit an exercise of reason which is purely philosophical and systematically removed from the influence of faith. Such as it found expression in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, for example, the moderate position is well represented by St. Anselm and St. Bonaventure, who, moreover, invoke with perfect justice the authority of St. Augustine. The use of the pure reason certainly appears possible to them. After the existence of Plato and Aristotle, how could that be doubted? But St. Anselm and St. Bonaventure always remain on the level of concrete conditions under which the activity of reason takes place, and not on the level of reason *in statu naturae purae*. Now, it is a fact that between the Greek philosophers and the modern world there has taken place a Christian Revelation which has profoundly changed the conditions governing the activity of reason. How is it possible for those who have this revelation to philosophize without taking it into consideration? The errors of Plato and Aristotle are precisely the errors of the pure reason; every philosophy which claims to be self-sufficient will fall into the same or even greater errors, so that from now on the only safe method for us will be to take revelation as a guide in order to reach some understanding of its content. It is this understanding of revelation in which philosophy itself consists. *Fides quaerens intellectum*, that is the guiding principle of all medieval speculation. But would not that result also in a confusion of philosophy and theology which would destroy philosophy itself?

It is to avoid this danger that certain neo-Scholastics have thought it necessary to adopt in part the position of their adversaries. After conceding the principle, they try to prove that the only philosophy worthy of the name which ever existed during the middle ages was that of St. Thomas. St.

Anselm and St. Bonaventure in beginning with faith remain necessarily within the realm of theology. The Averroists remain within the realm of reason but in refusing to hold as true the most necessary conclusions of reason they exclude themselves from the realm of philosophy. Thomism alone presents itself as a system whose philosophical conclusions are deduced from purely rational premises. In that system theology has its proper place, namely at the head of the various departments of knowledge. Founded upon divine revelation from which its principles are derived, it is a distinct science, which begins with faith and uses reason only to explain its own content or to protect itself against error. So far as philosophy is concerned, though it is true that it is subordinate to theology, nevertheless, it depends as such only on the method which is proper to itself. Having been founded on human reason, owing its truth only to the evidence of its principles and the exactness of its conclusions, philosophy achieves spontaneously an accord with faith without violating its own principles. If it finds itself in accord with faith, the reason is simply that philosophy is true and that truth cannot contradict truth.[1]

Without doubt, between such a neo-Scholastic and a pure rationalist there remains a fundamental difference. The neo-Scholastic holds to faith, and any disagreement between his faith and his philosophy is the certain sign of philosophical error. In such a case, it is necessary for him to reconsider his conclusion and his principles until he has discovered the error which renders them faulty. Nevertheless, even then if he does not agree with the rationalist, it is not because they do not speak the same language. Such a neo-Scholastic will not commit the unpardonable error of a St. Augustine or a St. Anselm, and invite us first to believe in the existence of

[1] Cf. the classic study of Father M.-D. Chenu, *La théologie comme science au XIII^e siècle*, in *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge*, Vol. II (1927) p. 31–71.

God when we ask for a proof. If his philosophy is true, it is because of its rational evidence alone; if he does not succeed in convincing his adversary, it would not be legitimate for him to appeal to faith for his justification, not only because this faith is not admitted by his adversaries, but also because the truth of his philosophy rests in no way on that of his faith.

When an interpretation of this character is given to the philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas, certain consequences as surprising as they are inevitable appear immediately. First of all, the Augustinians of every age, as we remember, have raised vehement protests against the paganization of Christianity by Thomism. If certain modern Thomists deny that Augustinism is a philosophy, the Augustinians of the middle ages long before them said that Thomism was not faithful to the Christian tradition. Whenever they have fought against some Thomistic thesis whose truth appeared contestable to them, they have reënforced their dialectical criticism by objections of a much more general nature, intended to reach the very spirit of the doctrine. If Thomism has erred on the problem of illumination, of seminal reasons or of the eternity of the world, is it not because it was mistaken at the very beginning on the fundamental problem of the relations between faith and reason. For just as soon as we refuse to follow St. Augustine, who himself professes to follow faith, in order to follow the principles of some pagan philosopher or of his Arabian commentators, reason is rendered powerless to discern truth from error. Reduced to its own power, reason allows itself to be blinded by doctrines whose errors cannot be discerned because of this very blindness.

Nor is this the most curious point. Just as certain Augustinians reproach Thomism with being a false philosophy because it is not Christian, so certain Thomists reply that if this philosophy is true, it cannot be in any way because it is Christian. In fact, they must adopt this position because

as soon as reason in its activity is separated from faith, all intrinsic relation between Christianity and philosophy becomes contradictory. If a philosophy is true, that is only because it is rational; but if it merits the title of rational, that could not be because it is Christian. Here is a parting of the ways. A Thomist will never admit that there is anything whatever in the doctrine of St. Thomas contrary to the spirit or to the letter of faith, for he professes expressly that the accord of revelation and reason is only the accord of truth with itself; but we ought not to be too surprised to see that some Thomists accept without qualm the classic reproach of the Augustinians: your philosophy no longer has any characteristic that is intrinsically Christian. Indeed, how could it have this characteristic without ceasing to exist? The philosophical principles of St. Thomas are those of Aristotle, that is to say of a man for whom neither the Christian nor even the Jewish revelation existed. If Thomism has completed and purified Aristotelianism, this never took place by a recourse to faith, but by a more correct or more complete deduction than Aristotle himself had made of the consequences implicit in his own principles. Briefly, so long as we are on the level of philosophical speculation, Thomism is only an Aristotelianism rationally corrected and judiciously completed, and St. Thomas had no more to baptize Aristotelianism to render it true than he had to baptize Aristotle to agree with him: the philosophical dialogue is carried on between reason and reason, and not between reason and Christian faith.

The logical conclusion of such an attitude is the negation pure and simple of the very notion of Christian philosophy, and surprising as it may be, such a position has actually been held. Not only have there been historians who deny that Christianity has seriously affected the course of philosophical speculation, but there have also been neo-Scholastic philosophers who affirm as an indisputable fact that the

notion of Christian philosophy is meaningless. In fact, either we shall have to use philosophy to facilitate the acceptance of religious dogmas, and thus identify philosophy with apologetics; or we shall subordinate the value of the conclusions obtained through reason to their agreement with dogma, and thus enter the realm of theology; or, again, in order to avoid these difficulties, we shall make up our minds quite boldly to say that *Christian philosophy* means purely and simply *true philosophy*, and then no reason will be forthcoming to show why this philosophy should be discovered and professed by Christians any more than by unbelievers or by opponents of Christianity; or, finally, we shall add that this true philosophy, in order to be Christian, has only to be compatible with Christianity; but if this compatibility is only a concrete circumstance due to the purely rational development of its first principle, the relation of philosophy to Christianity remains no less extrinsic than it was in the preceding instance, while if this compatibility is the conscious result of a special effort, we find ourselves again within the realm of theology or apologetics. We are moving in a circle. It is as though we were trying to define in clear terms a contradictory notion, that of a philosophy, in other words, a rational discipline, which would be at the same time religious, that is to say, whose essence or activity would depend on nonrational conditions. Why should we not therefore abandon an idea with which no one is satisfied? Augustinism would not object to a Christian philosophy provided it is content with being Christian and gives up being a philosophy; neo-Thomism would not object to a Christian philosophy provided it is content with being a philosophy and gives up being Christian: would not the simplest solution be to dissociate completely the two ideas and, trusting philosophy to reason, to restore Christianity to religion?

In the face of such an agreement between the observation of fact and the analysis of ideas, it would be absurd for us to

wish not to take it into account, were we not reminded of the complex relations which unite ideas to facts. It is very true that as a simple collection of facts history never decides the significance of any problem, because the decision always belongs to ideas; but it is equally true that concepts derive their existence from facts, and, once existing, become critics of facts. Now it is a fact that in the problem of defining the notion of Christian philosophy, though the deductive method has been used extensively, the inductive method has been used scarcely at all; and we may add that such an induction has been very rare when it has been undertaken from a Christian point of view. In what way have philosophical thought and the Christian faith conceived the relations which exist between them? What did each think to give and to receive in the interchange of ideas which grew up between them? These are vast questions to which decisive answers are not lacking, and the methodical investigation of which challenges the powers of human thought, not only because of the multiplicity of particular problems which it would be necessary to solve for a successful conclusion, but also because the solution of each of these problems depends in part on the attitude which we adopt towards the facts themselves. Nevertheless, these are problems which we must at least state, provided we wish to develop a discussion of the idea of Christian philosophy that is fundamentally serious and, given the existence of a corresponding historical reality, to make possible its definition.

But does such an historical reality exist, indeed, can we conceive that it has existed? Good historians have denied this, basing themselves on the character of primitive Christianity which was exclusively practical and foreign to all speculation. Harnack has done much to spread this idea, and after him it will be found frequently in many different authors. The course of these lectures will show quite sufficiently my attitude towards that question. For the present, I wish

only to eliminate the first question which this problem raises and to remove the sort of prohibition which it places upon every undertaking of the kind that I propose to consider.

What is meant by saying that Christianity when considered in its beginnings is not at all *speculative?* If the meaning of such a statement is that Christianity is not a philosophy, then nothing is more evident; but if it is intended to prove that even on a specifically religious level Christianity did not admit any speculative element, and that it was reduced to an attempt at mutual assistance, at once spiritual and material, among the various communities, then such a statement passes perhaps beyond the limits which historical observation admits. Where is such a Christianity, unacquainted with speculation, to be found? In order to meet it, we should have to go back to the time before St. Justin and eliminate from primitive Christian literature many pages from the Apostolic Fathers; we should have to suppress the first epistle of St. John with all the mystical speculation of the middle ages that it inspired; we should have to reject the Pauline teaching on grace from which was to be born soon after the thought of St. Augustine; we should have to suppress the gospel of St. John with the doctrine of the Word contained in its prologue: we should have to pass to a time before the synoptic gospels and deny that Jesus Christ himself has taught the doctrine of the Heavenly Father, has preached faith in the providence of one God, has announced to men eternal life in a kingdom without end; we should have to forget above all that primitive Christianity was more intimately related to Judaism according as it was more primitive. Now the Old Testament contained a number of ideas on God and the divine government which, without having a specifically philosophical character, awaited only a favorable soil in which to develop into philosophical consequences. The fact, therefore, that there is no philosophy in the Scriptures does not give us the right to hold that the

Scriptures could not have exercised any influence on the evolution of philosophy. For the possibility of such an influence, it is necessary only that the Christian life should contain from its beginnings speculative as well as practical elements, even though the speculative elements existed only in a strictly religious form.

If from an historical point of view nothing prevents the undertaking of such a study, we may add that from a philosophical point of view nothing renders it *à priori* absurd. Nothing, not even the ancient quarrel which divides certain Augustinians from certain Thomists. The reason why they do not understand one another, is that under the same name they are trying to answer two different problems. The Thomists will accept the Augustinian solution to the problem only when the Augustinians recognize that, even in a Christian, reason is essentially distinct from faith and philosophy from religion. Now St. Augustine himself recognizes this; there is nothing left, therefore, except that an Augustinian admit a distinction that is so necessary. Conversely, the Augustinians will accept the Thomistic solution to the problem when the Thomists recognize that, in a Christian, reason in its present state and activity is inseparable from faith. Now St. Thomas himself recognizes this; there is nothing, therefore, which prevents a Thomist from accepting this position. If this is true, though we do not know as yet what Christian philosophy comprises, it does not appear to be theoretically contradictory. There is at least one level on which it is not impossible, namely, the level of concrete conditions in which the rational activities of a Christian take place. There is no such thing as a Christian reason, but it is possible to have an activity of reason under Christian conditions. Why should we refuse to admit *à priori* that Christianity could have changed the course of the history of philosophy by opening up to human reason, through the mediation of faith, horizons which it had not yet discovered? That is a fact which need

not have come to be, but there is nothing to prove that it could not have come to be. And we can go even farther and say that this is a fact which a mere glance at the history of modern philosophy bids us believe came to be.

The progress of the classical philosophy of the seventeenth century is with justice related to the development of the positive sciences in general and to the development of mathematical physics in particular. That is the point upon which Cartesianism is opposed to the metaphysics of the middle ages. But why do we not ask more often on what point Cartesianism is opposed to the metaphysics of the Greeks? It cannot be a question of making Descartes a *Christian philosopher*, but is there any one who will dare to hold that modern philosophy from Descartes to Kant would be exactly what it has been, if there had not existed *Christian philosophies* between the end of the Hellenistic period and the beginning of the modern era? In other words, the middle ages perhaps have not been so philosophically sterile as it is supposed, and it is perhaps to the dominant influence exercised by Christianity in the course of this period that modern philosophy owes some of the leading principles which have inspired it. A rapid examination of the philosophical output of the seventeenth, eighteenth and even nineteenth centuries will reveal immediately characteristics that it appears difficult to explain without taking into account the rational effort pursued by Christian thought between the end of the Hellenistic period and the beginning of the Renaissance.

Let us open for example the works of René Descartes, the philosophical reformer *par excellence*, the man of whom Hamelin dared to write that he "comes after the ancients, almost as though there had existed nothing between them and him with the exception of the physicists." What are we to understand by this *almost?* We can recall first of all the title of his *Méditations sur la metaphysique* "in which are proved the existence of God and the immortality of the

soul." We can recall again the parentage of his proofs of the existence of God with that of St. Anselm and even those of St. Thomas. It would not be impossible to show the indebtedness of his doctrine of freedom to medieval speculations on the relations of grace and free choice, an eminently Christian problem.[2] But it will be sufficient perhaps to point out that the whole Cartesian system hangs upon the idea of one God who is all-powerful, who in some way or other creates himself, who therefore creates eternal truth including the truth of mathematics, who creates the universe *ex nihil* and conserves it in existence through a continued creation without which all things would return to the nothingness from which His will has produced them. We shall have to ask very soon whether the Greeks knew the idea of creation, but the only fact which requires such a question suggests irresistibly the hypothesis that in this problem Descartes depends directly upon the Biblical and Christian tradition and that in its very essence his cosmogony only penetrates more deeply into the teaching of his masters concerning the origin of the universe. Besides, what is this God of Descartes: infinite being, perfect, all-powerful, creator of heaven and earth, Who has made man in His image and likeness and conserves all things by the same action which has created them, — what, in brief, is the God of Descartes if not the God of Christianity whose nature and traditional attributes one can easily discover in this doctrine? Descartes affirms that his philosophy is not in the least dependent either on theology or on revelation, that all the ideas with which he begins are clear and distinct ideas which the natural reason, upon a little attentive analysis of its content, discovers within itself; but how does it happen that these ideas which are of a purely rational origin turn out to be exactly the same in their essential aspects as those that

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[2] É. Gilson, *Études sur le rôle de la pensée médiévale dans la formation du system cartésien*, Paris, J. Vrin, 1930. Cf. *La liberté chez Descartes et la théologie*, Paris, F. Alcon, 1913.

Christianity had taught in the name of faith and revelation for sixteen centuries? This agreement, in itself suggestive, becomes still more so when the example of Descartes is compared with the analogous examples of those who surrounded him.

The personality of Malebranche, when compared with that of his master, appears to be only of secondary importance; nevertheless, we cannot neglect it without rendering unintelligible the history of modern metaphysics. His doctrine of the indemonstrability of the existence of the external world combined with that of the vision in God prepares immediately the idealism of Berkeley; while his occasionalism which supposes the impossibility of proving any transitive action of one substance upon another prepares immediately the criticism directed by Hume against the principle of causality. In any case, it is enough to read Hume to realize that he is aware of following Malebranche in this question. We are faced, therefore, by an important, perhaps even decisive, moment in the history of modern philosophy. Now, whose authority does Malebranche invoke? He invokes St. Augustine as much as he does Descartes. Of course, he protests against Scholastic philosophy with greater vehemence than had Descartes himself, but instead of reproaching Scholasticism with having identified philosophy with religion, as one might imagine, this modern philosopher reproaches it with not having been sufficiently Christian. The error of St. Thomas Aquinas consists in having followed Aristotle and Averroes, a pagan and his "*misérable commentateur*," instead of following St. Augustine who was the perfect representative of the Christian tradition. Nor is it a question here of a criticism that is accidental and external to the system but of a reproach which aims at the very heart of the system. If Scholasticism had been more Augustinian, it would have been more religious and consequently more true.[3]

[3] Malebranche, *Recherche de la vérité par la raison naturelle*, Preface.

In fact, what should a Christian philosophy, worthy of the name, be? First and foremost, it should be the exaltation of the glory and the power of God. He is Being and Efficacy in the sense that every thing that is, is only through Him and that everything that is made is made through Him. What, on the contrary, are Aristotelianism and Thomism? They are philosophies of nature, that is to say, systems in which substantial forms or natures are supposed to exist which are certain kinds of being endowed with efficacy and productive of all the effects that we attribute to the activity of bodies. Nothing is more natural than that a pagan philosopher such as Aristotle should attribute this subsistence, this independence and this efficacy to finite beings. Likewise, that it should make the knowledge which we have of bodies depend on their existence and on their action upon our souls, is no more than we can expect. But a Christian should know better. Knowing that *to cause* means *to create*, and that creation is the proper operation of the divine being, St. Thomas should have denied the existence of natures or substantial forms, should have referred to God alone all efficacy, and in this way should have placed in Him the origin of all our knowledge as well as that of our actions. In a word, it is as essential parts of a philosophy that is truly Christian and founded on the idea of the all-powerful that Malebranche upholds the truth of occasionalism and of the vision in God.

It would be very easy to multiply examples and show what truly over-powering influence God the Creator of the Old Testament has exercised on the imagination of classical metaphysicians. To quote Pascal would be to take up a position that is too easy to defend, since to a great extent it would amount to quoting St. Augustine; but we forget too often, perhaps, to ask ourselves what would remain of the system of Leibnitz if we suppressed in imagination the elements of that system which are specifically Christian. There would not even remain the statement of his most fundamental

problem, namely that of the radical origin of things and the creation of the universe by a God who is perfect and free. It is with this notion of perfect being that the *Discours de metaphysique* opens, and it is with a justification of divine providence, indeed with a reference to the Gospels that this treatise, whose great importance in the work of Leibnitz cannot be contested, is brought to its conclusion: "The ancient philosophers had very little knowledge of these important truths; Jesus Christ alone has expressed them divinely well, and in a way that is so clear and so familiar that even the dullest minds have understood them; His Gospels also have completely changed the face of human affairs."[4] These are not at all the words of a man who thinks that he is following the Greeks as though nothing had existed between them and him. We could say as much of Kant, did we not so often forget to complete his *Critique of Pure Reason* with his *Critique of the Practical Reason*. We could even say as much of our contemporaries.[5]

For it is a curious fact and one worthy of remark, that if they have ceased to refer to the *City of God* and to the Gospels as Leibnitz does not hesitate in doing, our contemporaries have not ceased to feel their influence. Many of them are living on what they no longer know. I shall quote, for purposes of illustration, only one example, but a very characteristic one, that of W. P. Montague, whose *Belief Unbound* has just been published.[6] After having noted the fact that rude hypotheses rise spontaneously in the minds of men during primitive periods of history, Mr. Montague adds that we can then observe the occurrence of a strange phenomenon, ". . . perhaps the strangest and most retrogressive in all human culture, which consists in the translation of the crude

[4] On the religious elements in the philosophy of Leibnitz, cf. J. Baruzi, *Leibnitz et l'organization religieuse de la terre*, Paris, F. Alcon, 1907.

[5] Kant, *Die Metaphysik der Gitten*, Methodenlehre.

[6] W. P. Montague, *Belief Unbound*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1930; for the quotations, cf. p. 9–10 and p. 97.

hypothesis of our ignorant ancestors into dogmas proclaimed by divine omniscience." Thus it happens that the Christian Old Testament which presents itself and pretends to impose itself as a divine revelation, is only a body of popular beliefs, an example of folk-lore unduly deified. Mr. Montague is in need of a new Promethean God, as he calls him, ". . . and what this Promethean conception means is that the holy spirit of God, could we but feel it, would not only be courage to hearten us in weakness, and solace to comfort us in sorrow . . . but power and light and glory beyond what we had, however much we had."

One could hardly preach better than that, and for a very good reason. If that is what the new belief at length liberated from the folk-lore of the Christian Old Testament is to offer us, Yale University could substitute a public reading of St. John or St. Paul for the *D. H. Terry Lectures*. Furthermore, if the new God, according to the belief of W. P. Montague, differs from the ancient God in that he affirms instead of denying life, we are reduced to asking what meaning the notion of Christianity can have retained in the spirit of our contemporaries. In reality, the new religion of Mr. Montague is an amusing example of Biblical folk-lore mingled with Greek folk-lore. He considers as new philosophical ideas vague recollections of the Gospels which he read when he was young and which something in him without his knowledge refuses to forget.

There are, therefore, some historical reasons to cast some doubt on the radical separation of philosophy and religion in the centuries following the middle ages; and, in any case, it is permissible to ask whether the classical metaphysics has not been nurtured on the substance of Christian revelation much more profoundly than is admitted. To ask the question in this form is simply to state upon another level the same problem of Christian philosophy. If there have been philosophical ideas introduced into pure philosophy by Christian revelation,

if something of the Old and the New Testaments has passed into metaphysics; in a word, if it is impossible to conceive that the systems of Descartes, of Malebranche or of Leibnitz could have been formed such as they are without any influence upon them of the Christian religion, it becomes exceedingly probable that the notion of Christian philosophy has a meaning, because the influence of Christianity on philosophy is a reality.

For one who is convinced of this reality there are two attitudes possible with reference to it. One may admit with Auguste Comte that metaphysics will fall into desuetude, just as did the theologies of which it is only a shadow. Or, one may accept as a fact that, just as theology has survived the requiem sung for it, so metaphysics will continue for a long time to come to find its inspiration therein. That, I believe, is a point of view which is the more true because it agrees the better with the enduring vitality of Christianity; and it is difficult to see how it could vex those who have faith in the future of metaphysics. Whatever may happen in the future, that is the lesson which emerges from the past. "Without doubt," observed Lessing with profound insight, "religious truths were not rational when they were revealed, but they were revealed in order to become rational." [7] Not all, perhaps, but at least some of them, and that is the meaning of the question to which the lectures that are to follow will try to find a reply. At the beginning of such an investigation, our first task will be to question Christian philosophers themselves on the meaning of Christian philosophy. That is what we shall do in asking them what benefit their reason found in taking its inspiration from the Old and the New Testaments.

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(Translated by A. C. PEGIS)

[7] Lessing, *Ueber die Erziehung des Menchengeschlechtes;* quoted by M. Guéroult, *L'Évolution et la structure de la doctrine de la science chez Fichte*, Strasburg, vol. I, p. 15.

(The solution of the problem will appear in the next issue of the Hound & Horn.)

ARCHITECTURE CHRONICLE

INTERNATIONAL ARCHITECTURAL STYLE

THE recent exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art [1] is the first comprehensive showing in New York of the International Style of Architecture. That name is taken from the sponsors of the exhibition who have chosen to so designate the greater part of the work that is shown "because of its simultaneous development in several countries and because of its world wide distribution it has been called The International Style."

Whatever one chooses to call it, the new style is an important milestone along the road of architectural history, for it shows, even in its infancy, that the architects who are creating it have adopted a radically new attitude toward the media of their profession. This attitude consists in a turning back to the fundamentals of building and a desire to become familiar with the anatomy of their own creations. It is doubtful whether so self-conscious a return to fundamentals has ever taken place in the history of architecture. But this

[1] The Catalogue of the exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, with monographs on the nine leading architects, illustrated with 80 reproductions of models, plans and photographs, including a short history of the modern movement, together with a special essay by Lewis Mumford on Housing, is issued by the W. W. Norton Co. at $3.00, publishers also of The International Style; Architecture since 1922, by Philip Johnson and Henry-Russell Hitchcock, with an introduction by Alfred H. Barr, Jr., and many plates. $5.00. 1932.

preoccupation with the technique of building, and the evolution of a style based on this technique rather than a cultural or aesthetic prejudice are not new. It was in some such frame of mind that the Byzantine architects must have worked, in the beginning at least, a state of mind in which it was all important to master the problem of building their walls and vaulting out of brick rather than concrete. Later, as cut stone replaced brick, the readjustment of this technical knowledge played an important part in the growth of the Gothic style. But from that time on, until the beginning of the nineteenth century there were, practically speaking, no new structural problems. The most elaborate stone vaulting in the palace of Versailles could easily have been carried out by thirteenth-century masons; staircases were built as they always had been, and the floor construction of a Louis XVI château differed little from that of large mediaeval houses. For five hundred years structural methods remained materially the same and new styles in architecture found their origin in social changes and the variations in aesthetic ideals that accompanied them.

Early in the last century iron and steel made their appearance as structural materials and shortly after them mechanical inventions such as plumbing and central heating were incorporated in buildings. It seems surprising that these innovations had for several generations so little effect on architectural style. But when one remembers that they were in the beginning undoubtedly expensive, that they could in many instances with a little ingenuity be adapted for use in conjunction with prevailing building methods (one recalls that when electric lighting was first installed, the old gas pipes were used for electrical conduits) and finally that they were invading territory that had been governed for five hundred years by an almost unbroken structural tradition, it becomes easier to understand why their importance met with such slow recognition. Sporadic examples of architecture that was structurally up to date appeared here and there; — the Crystal Palace, railroad stations with enormous glass train sheds, and later in the century one or two department stores in the large European cities. But most of these buildings were looked upon by laymen, and even by critics, as belonging to the body of engineering or as mechanical tour-de-forces rather than as architecture.

The International Style has made such classification impossible. From now on, whether conservative architects and critics care to admit it, buildings which take into account in their design the

technological advances of the modern world will be called architecture. It matters not what the architecture of the future looks like. It may well choose to dress itself in more conventional clothing and search once more in the past for methods of adornment, so that by comparison the rudimentary examples which at present constitute the only evidence of the International Style may seem almost grotesque. But whatever happens, the break has been made. It will be impossible for architects of the future, whatever stupidities they achieve, to commit the errors of the nineteenth century, and this purging will have been largely due to the men whose work is on view at the Museum of Modern Art.

It is only natural that the impresarios of this new style should bestow exaggerated praise upon it. To a less prejudiced observer its sociologic and philosophic implications are for the present more valuable than its aesthetic achievements. It is good architecture to the extent that it has cast off many of the evils of its precursors, but it is not yet good architecture if that term implies an unerring eye for fine proportions and the degree of assurance which enables the great artist to appreciate the authority of an understatement. Like some artists of the Italian Renaissance who, having discovered the science of perspective, allowed their discovery to lead them into the mere exposition of their own technical virtuosity, to the temporary exclusion of all other ideas, the apostles of the international style are often led astray through an over-jealous manipulation of their new technique. It is not enough to use a new type of window, or a cantilevered stair because they offer definite aesthetic or practical advantages; too often they are used for literary reasons, like slogans in an advertising campaign. It is probably inevitable that a group of men who have found in modern technology a rock on which to lay the foundations for a new architecture should, in turn, begin to worship that same technology for its own sake. Unfortunately, abstract rocks are no better to build on than other abstractions. The first great architect of the International Style will be one who is worldly enough to take the modern idiom for granted and show that the style can be made practical. For it is on the practical side, strangely enough, that most of the work shown in the exhibition appears weakest.

It is only an explanation, not an excuse, to point out that some of the exhibitors have had few opportunities to put their principles into practice and that they have been forced to do so much of their work on paper or in the form of projects. With few exceptions they have

used each new building as a proving ground for theories, forcing the development of the style at a pace that has allowed them little time to profit by experience. But the whole movement is in its infancy, and it is reasonable to suppose that its followers will eventually discover that steel and glass are not objects of worship, but simply new building materials. And when they have laid low the other myth, the dream of a Universal Architecture, an architecture fulfilling the universal needs both spiritual and physical, of a mythical world-citizen, they will abandon unnecessary theorizing and build good houses in Bismarck, N. D., or Singapore.

The architecture of Miës van de Rohe is the most distinguished in the exhibition. It is marked by a restraint and beauty of proportions that are lacking in the work of most of his contemporaries. He is the least prone to caricature or to advertise the technical methods by which he obtains his results; he has accepted the modern idiom more calmly, as though he understood that radicalism per se offers scanty nourishment to the artist, however excellent it may be as a stimulant. Among the many who predict that the principles of aesthetics which are to be found in the Parthenon may be reborn in this modern style, Miës alone makes the hope seem plausible, not with words, but through the more convincing medium of his design. He understands that once the technical method is established the duty of the architect is to create a sensitive adjustment of the forms that such a method may dictate. It is not surprising that his talent, which never resorts to the theatrical, has only recently been recognized in a world half numbed by advertising, whether it be General Motors presenting a new Chevrolet, or Picasso presenting himself.

The plan of the Tugendhat House at Brno is straightforward and his use of free standing partitions that can be shifted is rich in suggestions for interior architecture of the future. The plan of the second floor, however, is much too open on the street side, particularly as the street (in so far as one can judge from photographs) seems to be a wide and very public thoroughfare, and the treatment of the street façade exaggerates this impression by looking like a restaurant for a small airport. The extreme depth of the living room does not justify the colossal amount of glass area. Rooms of this size can only be successfully lighted from opposite sides or from above. The quality of light at the rear of any large but low room, no matter how big the windows may be, is always disagreeable, as any one that has been in a New York loft building can testify. A high keyed scheme

of wall-decoration only aggravates the unpleasant character of the half light that pervades such rooms.

Less extreme, and probably a finer piece of design is the Lange House at Krefeld. It has serenity and great beauty of proportion, achieved with a simplicity of means that would result in something merely ordinary in the hands of a less skillful designer. The German Pavilion at the Barcelona Exposition is superb to look at and here the open planning is justified since there were presumably no requirements of domestic privacy to be met.

It is impossible to leave the work of Miës without mentioning his project for the Kröller House, 1912, — and a project for a Brick Country House, 1922. The first of these makes clear the tremendous debt he owes to Schinkel; the second marks a very logical point in the development of his style. In this house one sees his scheme of free partitions fully worked out, but the openings between them are smaller, wall is given precedence over glass, and in many ways the result is superior; it is certain that an intelligent adaption of his theories to our climate would produce a house more nearly like the Brick Country House and less like the House at Brno.

If Miës who can rightly claim descent from Schinkel, is the classicist of the new movement, Le Corbusier is its Romantic leader. There is, of course, no direct analogy to be drawn between him and the Romanticists of the past. The strict discipline which the followers of this new style have imposed on themselves has produced work so severe in appearance that it is difficult to call any of it Romantic, and we are so used to seeing the Romantic imagination appear in fancy costume, turrets and gables, profusions of Gothic or Oriental ornament, crenelated walls and the like, that we have difficulty in recognizing it when it appears in the chaste garb of the International Style. Nevertheless, Le Corbusier's ramps in the Savoye House, and the saw-tooth roof of the Ozenfant House, together with his obscure and often weak planning, are all distant cousins of the Swiss Chalet roof and ubiquitous bay windows of the 'eighties. His architecture is one of polemics; each house proclaims aloud the virtues of the cantilever, of skylights or some new structural device as though it were an exhibit in an Industrial Exposition.

His point of view seems not unlike that of a hardware manufacturer to whom a door is nothing but a large object on which to fasten hardware. When he exhibits his wares he considers it sufficient to represent the door with a small section of stile or rail; he is

interested solely in the technical perfection of his product. It does not occur to him that it is quite possible to keep a door shut without doorknobs, but far more difficult to make doorknobs serve their purpose without a door. This limited preoccupation with a technical problem for its own sake is easy to forgive in the maker of a device, far less so in the architect; for a house, Le Corbusier to the contrary, is not a machine to live in, nor is it a device. It is and always has been an assemblage of devices or machines under one roof. The taut poles of an Indian wigwam, the columns of the Temple at Karnak are supporting machines, albeit simple ones, but both the wigwam and the Temple are something over and above the machines they contain. It is the duty of future architects to recognize the presence of new machines or devices, to cope with their growing complexity, and to incorporate them in their buildings without becoming enslaved by them. When Le Corbusier writes, he is the master of his ideas; when he designs they master him.

The Ozenfant House, the Houses at Boulogne-sur-Seine, and the Double House at the Werkbund Housing Exposition are all ungainly in one sense or another. The cantilevering in this latter house results in a particularly disagreeable sense of insecurity and equally unfortunate proportions. In the Stein House at Garches, there is more repose, but the slanting marquise with its concrete tension members is difficult to forgive either as engineering or aesthetics. The plan of the Savoye House is in many ways highly impractical. All kitchen supplies must be carried through the main hall on both floors to arrive at their destination, while the bedrooms are so arranged that the utmost publicity is given to their occupants when they are washing or carrying out even more intimate physical duties. The garage is planned so that even the most proficient of New York taxi drivers would have difficulty getting a car into it, let alone out of it, and this diagonal placing of the garage has so distorted the plan of an adjacent guest room as to make it absurd. It is difficult to discern in many of these ugly and impractical features, anything but the affectations of a propagandist.

Let us turn to the American work that is exhibited. The inclusion of Frank Lloyd Wright is best explained on the grounds of courtesy. The courtesy due any brave man — free and independent enough to face almost alone — through a whole lifetime — an opposing army of architectural styles and ideas that seemed to him (and he was not much mistaken) vicious and meaningless. Small wonder that the present leaders in Europe's architectural revolution have

nearly all paid homage to him. As an artist and as a technician, he belongs to his own generation, a generation unwilling to admit that man could get along quite nicely for a while without the handicrafts; he has never submitted to a strict intellectual discipline as have Miës or Oud, and accordingly his work is set apart from the rest of the exhibition. The House on the Mesa is certainly tangent to the International Style if not within it, but the other examples of his work that are shown bear almost no relation to it. The scale of both the Millard House at Pasadena and the R. L. Jones House at Tulsa is extraordinary, although in the former, the elaborate surface pattern acts as a disguise. The Jones House shows how rapidly any architectural motive becomes associated in our minds with a definite scale. We are so used to seeing the motive that Wright has used, employed in the design of large industrial buildings that it is almost impossible to believe that the house is twenty feet high. At first glance it looks eighty.

If Frank Lloyd Wright's work does not lie within the official boundaries of the International Style, Raymond Hood's designs are even more distant from its territory. The Daily News Building is an undeniably striking conception and probably shook as much dust out of the architectural profession as any European importation could have done. Structurally, however, it bears no relation to the principles of the Continental modernists, for the building methods employed differ in no way from those of the average New York office building of the past, nor do they in the McGraw-Hill Building. In this respect the Empire State Building is the only modern skyscraper in New York. The proselytizers of the International Style have taken such alarm at the "Modernistic" mooring tower and a few irrelevent dabs of ornament that they have completely overlooked the virtues of this building and, in so doing, left out of the exhibition the first structurally new skyscraper that has been built in twenty-five years. It has been called theatric and false; compared to it the Daily News Building is stage scenery.

Howe and Lescaze's smaller work adds little or nothing to what has been done in Europe. It is in fact an unnecessarily literal adaptation to these shores of such work. The Hessian Hills school has an extraordinarily large amount of glass area for our climate, and for such small buildings brick or hollow tile still seem more satisfactory materials than concrete.

The Chrystie-Forsyth housing development should be valuable in helping to expose the outrageous stupidity of American city

housing. It is certainly an improvement over the average cheap New York tenements, but it is not entirely practical. Here again a European method, and a discredited one at that, has been used to solve problems that are essentially American. The habits and designs of an American workman are not those of his European cousin. It is difficult to imagine the average workman in this country who would be willing to traverse a long open balcony, covered in the winter with ice and snow — to say nothing of an all-year supply of garbage cans, in order to get to his front door. An enclosed corridor with a long band of windows would offer sufficient cross-ventilation and could be kept far tidier.

The Philadelphia Saving Fund Building displays a keener eye for surface pattern than any of Hood's skyscrapers; it is undeniably pleasing. The use of the cantilever in office buildings, however, remains questionable. Its advantages in the case of lofts are obvious, but in office buildings little is gained unless it be on the ground floor where it makes possible the installation of uninterrupted show windows. On the floors above it has become so usual to divide office space into eight-, sixteen-, and twenty-four-foot units which adapt themselves perfectly to the average sixteen-foot spacing of columns (average because it is economical) that the columns are most efficiently placed when they are in the exterior wall where they offer a simple abutment for interior partitions. There can be no quarrel with them from a standpoint of light-interference, as they would occupy at most ten per cent of the wall surface, a negligible amount for office purposes. The lower stories are treated in a dark granite which looks handsome in the photograph of the building. It is unfortunate that the transition from them to the horizontal upper stories is not more simply arrived at.

One of the rooms in the exhibition is devoted to the subject of housing. Mr. Mumford's comparison of Lower East Side Slums and Park Avenue Super-Slums is in no way exaggerated and the European Housing Developments of J. J. P. Oud, Ernst May, and Otto Haesler help to expose the barbaric conditions prevailing in America. The whole question of town-planning and housing is one of such importance that it merits far more careful and lengthy treatment than can be allotted to it in this article.

The catalogue is excellent. It is plentifully supplied with plans and well chosen photographs which in some cases supplement rather than duplicate the work in the exhibition. The critical notes by Philip Johnson and Russell Hitchcock are both just and en-

lightening,—nor could Alfred Barr's foreword be improved upon. The exhibition itself is a superb example of good showmanship, and those who have organized it must have felt themselves rewarded by the obvious interest and pleasure of the many who have visited it. A walk through the funereal precincts of this year's Architectural League show, where the attendance seems to be as low as the prevailing stock quotations, offers an amusing contrast.

HAROLD STERNER

Examples of the International Style were illustrated by full-page reproductions in the Fall Number of the HOUND & HORN, Vol. V, No. 1, opposite page 96, and in Vol. V, No. 2, opposite page 276.

MUSIC CHRONICLE

REVALUATION

BLANKET statement: the music of the quarter encompassed nothing new of value and permanence. Two exceptions must be taken: a small suite for orchestra by Geza Frid synthesized the postwar school of sophisticated humor, wrapping it up in a nice brown paper parcel with hempen string — constituted by a balance by turns either pleasingly exact or gloriously inexact. The usual elements — aerated jazz, a most chic and barrelorganic simplicity of tune and an equally chic and pornographic orchestration — were bound together a little loosely by a crisscross pattern of quite special twine. All of this of course has little to do with music, nor has the oddly spaced and excellent sonority of the Concerto for Percussion Instruments of Milhaud (the other exception), who, it appears, has not died after all. This comes very close to being good music.

Mahler is physically dead, Strauss mentally so, and Sibelius

might as well have died immediately after the completion of the Valse Triste as far as the knowledge and interest of the American public is concerned. Stravinsky seems to be in one of his temporary comas. Mahomet has left the mountains and turned to mice. The shoebutton eyes of these latter wink and glitter and are quite without expression. The first movement of the violin Concerto is diapered with the shallow and petulant chatter of the mouse fleeing the poised and whetted carving-knife of the opening chord. In the fourth he escapes to an attenuated rehearsal of Le Sacre du Printemps. The curving patterns of the second movement's beginning and ending are lovely and build a lovely tall shape in the mind. This and the curiously impressive third movement is the somnambulistic noise of an unquestionable Great One. Otherwise the music is hollow and empty, filling the air with dust, and the listener wears from the audition a puzzled and unsatisfied wrinkle between the eyebrows. The tide is out, out to a new low water mark, considerably lower even than that reached in Le Baiser de la Fée. Specious glitter of mud-flats in the sun.

To the enterprise of Mr. Koussevitsky are due performances of Mahler's Ninth Symphony, Sibelius' Fourth Symphony and Strauss' Also Sprach Zarathustra that were the most important happenings of the winter. At a second hearing, the Sibelius appears one of the few positively original musical organisms of the nineteen-hundred-and-nothings. In every bar can be heard a new and clear voice saying extraordinary and disconcerting things with the familiar words of notation. Compression and repression sustain the clean arch of this score, and from the reticent disproportion of the opening to the incredible deathlike pallor of the final chords, there is not a misplaced note. In the development section of the first movement a solo violoncello begins a strange figure, more curiously spaced than actually syncopated, like a rising flame. The other strings catch fire, wandering loosely as if the strain was too intense to remain in unison. A tremor starts in the cellos, the others catch the motion, and in an instant every bow is trembling like the witnesses of a horrible outrage, while flute and clarinet force out shrill unrelated fragments. The tension rises to a climax and bursts. The ghastly nightmare is all the more effective for being understated. The folkish air of the Scherzo has been pressed through a sieve of Sibelius and skims the thin-ice edge of nightmare several times, but always it escapes, the discordant sparkle of oboes is reabsorbed and the motion glides to safety. To be disre-

garded perhaps is the final suggestion of strangulation on the kettledrum. Not so the agony, the dumb striving for speech of the third movement. When it binds the disconnected voices together it becomes momentarily superb, but the ties loosen and collapse, and the coda narrows and is squeezed to a white funnel of air. The fourth starts bravely but it is doomed. Bells and spurious cheer cannot save it. Over a jiggy bagpiping of strings the winds pronounce the blight. It becomes plaintive and loiters, dragging a lame foot, becomes vague and random, tries once again and fails. Perishing is inescapable. Now everything is lagging. The most fantastic remedies are tried. The voices move from place to place, attempting feebly a new start. Inescapable. We crumble, we fade. End. End. End.

Who can compass this subtlety and economy? It is finer than the possibility of a dream can point.

Removed as far as possible at the opposite pole is the vastness and intricacy of the Mahler Symphony. Every idea, whether of the finest quality or of the cheapest shoddy, is gigantically swollen to the point of over-inflation. The complexity of the orchestration, impressionistic in technique, has never been equalled, but every isolated note tells, every fragmentary phrase either continues or projects itself into space in a way that the flatter orchestration of the Wagnerians seldom achieved. It is this quality of almost multi-dimensional leniency that gives a late Mahler score its feeling of tremendous excitement. The hand pushes from the inside against the surface and its yields in every direction. Even a page of Parsifal is resilient and snaps instantly into its original simple shape in the absence of tension. No brain can hope to enclose so much, and the wonder is that there is so much subtlety in the huge scheme. The slow movements that frame an empty space are the grave and graven elegy, packed and overflowing with beauty, of the Poor Gentleman Who Did Not Know When To Stop. Forgiveness is almost possible for the banalities of second and third movements, so richly and gloriously are they uttered. But it can never be forgotten that this is not the way to write music, that Mahler succeeds despite himself who was his own enemy, and that the first and fourth parts would be sublime entities if he could have said goodbye at the correct spot, remembering that nothing is as destroying as a prolonged farewell.

The splendid performances of these two unfamiliar symphonies by the Boston Orchestra equalled the perfection of their Zarathus-

tra. It is remarkable that this curious sequence of thoughts has survived its thirty years so brilliantly. The sunrise is still tremendously exciting and there are moments of real ecstasy: when the glittering sheet of the strings is riven by the opening harp, like a diver, of the Freuden und Leidenschaften; when the rising torrent leads der Genesende to the Tanzlied; and when the first stroke of the bell points with unbearable precision the white heat of the climax.

Though its validity may be questioned, the technical side is still effective. The empty arc of the rising C-G-C, and the alternating keys of C and B (nearest-farthest, farthest-nearest), particularly in the opening lift and fall of the Wissenschaft fugue-theme, indicate psychological refinements that could only be stated in a wordy volume. Though we cannot always admire, we are forced to depart feeling we have attended an exceptionally gorgeous and theatrical High Mass.

Mr. Koussevitsky also displayed the disappointing patchwork of the Mozart Requiem with the most sublime chorus-singing of recent years, and Mr. Walter bravely subjected the Philharmonic audiences to the terrific impression of Mahler's Fifth Symphony.

It is a little tragic that our tributes cannot go to younger and new composers, but we can only be thankful there have been such opportunities for interesting revaluation.

Post-Scriptum: Stop-press from Boston indicates an incomplete triumph for Aaron Copland's Ode. After an incisive beginning, the music loses shape and wanders until the entrance of the iron rhythms of the Allegro. Three long level sounds are jerked into short steep noises, hurled downward from the point of a slapstick. The process is repeated. From this grows the telegraphic repetition (almost an invention on a rhythm) of the main section. A surprisingly cantabile section recalls the Piano Concerto, and the Morse motto is resumed, to be alternately slowed up and (with exciting effect) gradually slowed down. Either faulty orchestration or performance removed the sting from the final bars, left us feeling a shade flat. In spite of the octave leaps and their exciting overreaching, and in spite of the fact that Mr. Copland says exactly what he means in the sparest and most athletic bones, the main emotion is not quite valid. It cannot be forgotten that it is a pièce d'occasion, smacking a little of a World's Fair. Mr. Copland's reputation has not retreated, but it has not advanced to any extent.

ROBERT H. PITNEY

FILM CHRONICLE

JAMES CAGNEY AND THE AMERICAN HERO

THE art of dramatic expression may be conceded as international property. The tradition of the drama from the classical unities and the five-act Elizabethan tragedy to the three-act English comedy of social problems and manners is, in the West, surely a continental heritage. There's hardly a single American play that can stand against the second best of Europe. America, however, has developed the movies, and is developing the talkies. The Germans, the Russians, occasionally the French, can take our Hollywood-forged instrument and make a finer thing with it than we have so far dared, but in spite of that, the industry is our creation, and its world-wide expansion is due to our ingenuity. America as yet has hardly produced a picture that generations could watch with pleasure. Hollywood has, in short, given us no *Hamlet*, no *Cherry Orchard*, nor anything nearly so well organized, but it has contributed sharp American types that we can recognize with intense pleasure.

Each movie type has several faces. There is a hero who has been a nice-looking juvenile from Wallace Reid to Douglas Fairbanks, Jr.; he has two or three dialects of action from fresh, rough-and-ready to wistful and sappy. He has had his attendant heroines from the Gish girls to Janet Gaynor. Then there are the type vil-

lainesses, or heavies from the vamp who was Theda Bara to the anomalous villainess-heroine type of Greta-Dietrich. And they have had their corresponding villains. There are a few other masks, — the comedians, for example, each with a little more solid differentiation due to a technical development.

Every so often in this carefully bred descent of types there is a line of sports, of powerful exceptions. For example, figures arise, not with "sex-*appeal*" as Gilbert Seldes pointed out, but with "*sex-menace*" — which is something else again. Rudolph Valentino had sex menace; so has Clark Gable. It is silent, imperious, will not be denied. Valentino was exotic, foreign, scarcely American. Gable is hardly exotic; he is as American as Eugene O'Neill. He is a strong silent man, or he is the 1931–32, maybe –33 model of a strong silent man.

The strong silent man is the heir of the American pioneer, the brothers of Daniel Boone whom James Fenimore Cooper immortalized as the American type for Europe. The strong silent man has been a trapper, a cowboy, a miner, a railroad man, a soldier, a sailor, a U. S. Marine. He has become, now, a surgeon, an architect, — even a movie director. The strong silent man means America just as a hunting squire means England, a man in a silk hat and waxed moustache means France, and a bullfighter Spain. He is more American than Uncle Sam, and now he's a gangster — or was. The public is supposed to be fed up with gangster films, so he talks tough-guy and is a taxi driver or an automobile racer. The origin of the lean, shrewd, lantern-jawed, slow-voiced, rangy, blond American pioneer was in the New England adventurer in the West. The type has become a short, red-headed Irishman, quick to wrath, humorous, articulate in anger, representing not a minority in action, but the action of the American majority; — the semi-literate lower middle class.

James Cagney, while he is neither typically strong or silent, does excellently as the latest title-holder of a movie-type which either has become or is derived from a national type. Cagney, in a way, creates his own type. After the creation we can put it in its proper niche in the Hall of Fame of our folk legends. Cagney is mick-Irish. He was trained as a tap dancer. He has had a small experience as a "legitimate" actor. He is the first definitely metropolitan figure to become national, as opposed to the suburban national figure of a few years ago, or of the farmer before that. He is, or has been, quick shooting, while old Bill Hart was straight shooting. He snarls, "If

JAMES CAGNEY (CENTRE): BLONDE CRAZY: 1931 WARNER BROTH

JAMES CAGNEY: 1932: TAXI

WARNER BROTHERS

I taut yuh meant dat why I'd . . ." instead of "When you say that, Pardner, smile." He twists a grapefruit in his lady's face which is the reverse and equivalent courtesy of the older "ladies first" school of etiquette. It delights and shocks us because it is based on the reverse of chivalry. Cagney may be a dirty little low-life rat, a hoodlum, a small-time racketeer, but when his riddled body is propped up against his mother's door, mummied in bandages and flecked with blood, we catch our throats and realize that this is a hero's death.

Cagney, in spite of the coincidence of his character with the American tough guy, whether it's a racketeer or taxi driver, is an independent actor in his own right and as finished and flexible an artist as there is in the talkies today. He has resisted every attempt to have himself exhausted by being made to act the same character in every play. Few new actors ever can survive the prestige of their first success. Cagney has an inspired sense of timing, an arrogant style, a pride in the control of his body and a conviction and lack of self-consciousness that is unique in the deserts of the American screen. We may think of the stock gestures of an Elizabethan bravo, slapping the rapier into scabbard, cocking his hat, or leaping to his horse, as typical active Elizabethan. In America there are men and boys lounging in front of drug stores, easing down off trucks, lifting up the hoods off their engines, sighting for a cue on a billiard table, tossing down their little pony of raw whiskey, or even shooting through the pocket of their double-breasted Tuxedos. When Cagney gets down off a truck, or deals a hand at cards, or curses, or slaps his girl, or even when he affords himself and her the mockery of sweetness, he is, for the time being, the American hero, whom ordinary men and boys recognize as themselves and women consider "cute." It is impossible to tell at once whether his handshake is cordial or threatening. He is "cute" — the way Abraham Lincoln said a certain trapper was "cute," that is quick, candid and ambiguous. Cagney is not a man yet, but neither is he a juvenile. He has not allowed himself to rely too much on the good stories and brilliant dialogue that he has been given. In his next picture we will see him as an automobile racer; after that as a prize fighter. No one expresses more clearly in terms of pictorial action the delights of violence, the overtones of a semi-conscious sadism, the tendency towards destruction, towards anarchy which is the basis of American sex-appeal.

LINCOLN KIRSTEIN

BOOK REVIEWS

CAVALCANTI AND POUND

GUIDO CAVALCANTI RIME. *Edited and in part translated by Ezra Pound. Genoa: Marsano S. A.* 1931. 75 *lire.*

ALTHOUGH this book does not print very much material that has not been printed before, it is important for a number of reasons. It gathers together the fruits of Ezra Pound's twenty years of study and translation of Guido, publishes forty large plates of the most important Cavalcanti MSS and establishes a variorum text of the poems. These years of labor have not been spent on a poet of mere archeological interest, for what Guido did is in many ways what poets nowadays are trying to do. Guido is a metaphysical poet without any of the "unsupportable conjecture and devastated terms of abstraction" that most people associate with metaphysical poetry. He is metaphysical because he writes about the action of "the body of air clothed in the body of fire," as Ezra Pound calls it. For Guido, love is not of the body, as it is for Catullus, nor is it "platonic" and aspiring to a consummation outside this world. For Guido, love fuses the best qualities of body and spirit; as though the spirit got the body's senses for its delight, and the body were irrigated and volatilized by the spirit's clarity. When Guido's lady comes "*fa di claritá l' aer tremare.*"

For him the psyche is as definitely and as intricately articulated as the mechanism of St. Thomas Aquinas's will. Guido will say

Davanti agli occhi mei veggio lo core
Et l' anima dolente [1]

as though he were looking at his hands and feet. He is never difficult because vague, but because he is altogether too precise. One's problem in reading him is to feel all the distinction he felt between his *soul* and his *heart*, his *mind* and his *spirit*. As Ezra Pound very rightly says: *The mediaeval mind had little but words* (*i.e.* concepts?) *to deal with, and it was more careful in its definitions and verbiage. . . . In depicting the motions of the "human heart" the durability of the writing depends on the exactitude.*

But detached as Guido is in comtemplating his passion, he is still more detached from the poems wrought out of that passion. He ends many of his *ballatte* with a set of directions that send the poem about its business as though it were fresh moulded Adam just let loose. It is like Chaucer's urbanity in *Go litle boke*.

Vanne a Tolosa, Ballatetta mia,
Ed entra quetamente a la Dorata,
Ed ivi chiama, che per cortesia
D'alcuna bella donna sia menata
Dinanzi a quella, di cui t'ho pregata;
E s' ella ti riceve,
Dille con voce leve:
"Per mercè vegno a vui." [2]

No matter how complicated Guido's matter may be, his manner of conveying it is as clear as a cry. "One thought cuts through another with clean edge," as Ezra Pound says.

Io vidi donne con la donna mia:
Non che niuna me sembrasse donna;
Ma simigliavan sol la sua ombria.

Pound's translation carries over as much of Guido's singing tone as can be brought into English. For instance, he turns the above lines into:

---

[1] I see my heart stand up before mine eyes,
While my self slaying mournful soul. . . .

[2] Speed Ballatet' unto Tolosa city
And go in softly neath the golden roof (N.D. de la Dorade)
And there cry out, "Will courtesy or pity
Of any most fair lady, put to proof,
Lead me to her with whom is my behoof?"
Then if thou get *her* choice
Say, with a lowered voice,
"It is *thy* grace I seek here."

Ladies I saw a-passing where she passed;
Not that they seemed as ladies to my vision,
Who were like nothing save her shadow cast.

The English seems to me as fine as the Italian. In fact, the line *Who were like nothing save her shadow cast* is more beautifully definite than *Ma simigliavan sol la sua ombria*. Not that the tone is identical in both, or could be, for where Italian slips easily into song, English can at best become recitative. English has no tone like *ombria*. And then *ombria* shows a clean Latin descent, like almost any Italian word, while *shadow*, like almost any English word, remembers a throng of minglings. The most remarkable translation in the book is of the canzone *Donna mi prega*. I shall not discuss it, however, since quotations do not convey its quality, and since one must study the whole thing four or five times over to realize what wit it must have taken to contrive such faithfulness.

It is interesting to compare the five sonnets that Ezra Pound translated for this book with the translations he did of them twenty years ago. Any random comparison of the two versions will show how much he has learned since the beginning of his career. The earlier version uses fewer words than the later one, and yet is padded with adjectives, while the later one is not. And the later version, though sticking much closer to the original, is freer, fresher and in every way more "youthful." The words in italics are those that have been added to the Italian sense.

circa 1910

Who is she coming, drawing all men's gaze
Who makes the air one trembling clarity

Till none can speak, but each sighs *piteously*
Where she leads Love *adown her trodden ways?*

circa 1930

Who is she that comes, makying turn every man's eye
And makying the air to tremble with a bright clearnesse
That leadeth with her Love, *in such nearness*
No man can proffer of speech more than a sigh?

In the later version the delicate alliterative emphasis and the expertness of the syntax create that air of hit and miss freedom that comes only with mastery. The verse sounds as free as a finch twittering in the dips of its flight. And just as each line has its various rhythm, so each sonnet uses a different rhyme scheme. The quaint

language is not a pastiche of pre-Shakespearean sonnets, or an attempt to make Cavalcanti talk Elizabethan the way Andrew Lang made Homer try to talk King James. Ezra Pound is matching Cavalcanti's early freshness with a color lifted from the early freshness of English poetry. This is part of what he means by Logopoeia, *the dance of the intellect among words*, which *employs words not only for their direct meaning, but takes count in a special way of habits of usage, of the context we expect to find with the word, its usual concomitants, of its known acceptances, and of ironical play.*

Ezra Pound has become a past master of this *dance of the intellect among words*, and it is this that has kept him writing and flourishing while so many other poets have had to stop. He is nourished by the history of language and of the spirit. He began his approach to the past through the way we all must take — approaching England and part of France through Henry James, Italy through Browning, our American past through James and Adams. He has never let knowledge relax his critical alertness, has never allowed himself to be bluffed by a resounding name, or put up with the second best.

This discipline has equipped him with the serenity of an acrobat, and has turned him into the perfect antagonist to flabbiness. His life gives us all an example of athletic strictness and of the rewards of going to school of the great. Having learned, he can teach others. His criticism does not so much state an opinion as challenge the reader to go him one better. His recent booklet *How to Read* is an irritant that no English teacher should be permitted to escape.

Every writer should reflect on his humility when he says that the writer's business is *to prevent ennui . . . to relieve, refresh, revive the mind of the reader — at reasonable intervals — with some form of ecstasy, by some splendour of thought, some presentation of sheer beauty, some lightning turn of phrase — for laughter, especially the laughter of the mind, is no mean form of ecstasy.* The obligation to give pleasure reminds one of the times when the artist was too urbane to announce himself as the prophet of an apocalypse, and too reverent to set himself up as the high priest of a personal new faith. It is this laughter of the mind that gives much of Ezra Pound's writing the charm that music had before Beethoven, the charm of Mozart, who is as heartless as the birds.

A. Hyatt Mayor

WHY HOMER IS DEAD

DID HOMER LIVE? *By Victor Bérard. New York. E. P. Dutton and Co.* 1931. $3.00.

THIS book is a translation of the late M. Victor Bérard's *La Résurrection d'Homère: Au Temps des Héros*, which was published in 1930. The translation reads easily and on the whole is competent. The English title is ridiculous, apparently chosen to take advantage of the echoes in the ears of the populace from the chief scandal of classical scholarship. Bérard has little to tell us about Homer, and although he believes that there was a "real" Homer he is far from satisfying orthodox unitarians. His Homer is reduced to the person "who added the tales at the court of Alkinoos to the tale of Odysseus the Wanderer." He has nothing to say about the Iliad, nothing about the last half of the Odyssey, and very little about the first four books of that poem.

The purpose of this book is, in Bérard's words: "I would like to speak to a wider public and offer some kind of a *résumé* of my opinions concerning the Homeric poems as I understand them, and, more especially, of the Odyssey. In this book I shall dispense with any show of erudition, any proofs and discussions. I shall confine myself to assertions which shall be as clear and brief as I can make them." Although a large part of Bérard's work has been concerned with the establishment of a new text, he spares us any of this and actually devotes himself in large part to an outline of his views about the Phoenician influence on the Odyssey, which he has

previously set forth in two large volumes entitled *Les Phéniciens et l'Odyssée*. There are also a chapter which gives a very cursory history of Homeric criticism and one which endeavors by a very thin thread of argument to put Homer's birthplace in Miletos.

His main thesis is an agreeable and possible one, even if it is impossible for it ever to be proved to the hilt. It comes from a suggestion in Strabo and is, briefly, that Homer, composing books IX-XII of the Odyssey, had before him a *periplous* or navigation guide for Phoenician sailors, such as we know to have been written later. This thesis is supported by arguments demonstrating Phoenician influence on early Greek culture and Egyptian influence with the Phoenicians as intermediaries. The Bible and cuneiform inscriptions are used to show that the Greeks must have been able to read and write long before Homer. (He assigns the poet the date given to him by Herodotus, about 850 B.C., and amusingly suggests that the theory of an illiterate *Volksepik* has the Ossian hoax as its basis.) This *periplous*, therefore, being possible, its existence and the poet's knowledge of it in some form are required by facts such as these: the Greeks of Homer's time had never ventured into the western Mediterranean; some knowledge of that sea is required to explain the similarity between Homer's descriptions and certain actual places; Odysseus visits only islands and the coasts and knows nothing of the hinterland, with which, of course, no mariners' guide would be concerned; Homeric place-names are frequently translations of Semitic roots which have survived in modern place-names; certain things, such as the strange name for Sicily, Thrinakia, can best be explained as a mistranslation.

Using this theory and drawing upon his own remarkable knowledge of Mediterranean geography (he lectured not only to classical students but also to sailors in the École des Hautes Études Maritimes), Bérard proceeds gaily to the real fun and plots Odysseus' wanderings on the map. Circe's island is Monte Circeo between Rome and Naples, Calypso's isle is Perejil outside the straits of Gibraltar, the Lotus-eaters live in Tunis, the Phaeacians are on Corfu, etc.

There are one or two minor mistakes in questions of fact in the book which are not worth attention. More important objections can be raised against the main thesis: there is little or no independent evidence for the presence of the Phoenicians in the western sea at such an early date. And his etymological evidence upon which Bérard leans heavily is debatable and certainly arbitrarily chosen.

Yet for all that it remains a tenable theory, agreeable to the imagination and not repugnant to the reason, which casts light into the pre-Homeric darkness.

One's real complaint against this book is that it suffers by reason of its compression. It was written obviously with fervor, almost with passion. A great deal of useful and delightful information is stowed away in its pages. But the argument is occasionally hard to follow and the material at times seems arranged almost at random. There is a deadening multiplicity of names that finally beats on a tired brain. And worse, the juice is gone; the detective-story element is minimized; the chase is too hot; the somewhat rambling excursions into the geography and population in all history of his beloved sea by which Bérard — "ce dramaturge, ce poète de la géographie" as Albert Thibaudet calls him — rightly set great store and which made his longer works a joy even to his enemies, the "Phoenicophobes," these too have to be left out. The Mediterranean has become only a map.

This compression was necessary if the favor of the populace was to be attracted to this book. The vulgar will read one short book, but not two or more long ones. Questions then must be raised. Is this a "popular" book? And what does the ordinary intelligent reader, who may have much or no Greek, want from a classical scholar?

Bérard has chosen for exegesis what is certainly the most popular part of the Odyssey. Limiting himself to the deep sea yarns, the tales that are gathered around Circe, Aeolus, the Cyclops, and Scylla and Charybdis, he can count on the aroused fancy of that audience which is always attentive to fairy tales. It might be argued that if his purpose was hortatory he has chosen well. Here is the most inviting approach to the dusty thorny paths of *Altertumswissenschaft*. Yet more cogent is the argument that it is just here that the reader has least need or use for guidance. He is held by an ancient mariner. The possibility that actual Phoenician mariners previously sailed this sea and kept logbooks has little or no significance. The one episode in Odysseus' narrative which, with its tragic and horrifying overtones, makes the greatest demands upon the reader's imagination and spirit and where criticism and information can be most helpful and enlightening, the visit to the dead, is, of course, skipped by Bérard entirely.

It is tempting to assert that all scholarship worthy of the name is ultimately of value to the most ordinary reader. Parenthetically we

can assert that if vulgarization has to be performed, let it be done by scholars such as Bérard. There have always been, however, denigrating voices. Lately Mr. John Jay Chapman was very abusive of scholars; he has paid the proper penalty in his complete misunderstanding of Plato. André Gide is a wiser man and his words have weight: "It is the philologist's business to inform me about the origins of a myth, but I am interested only when the meaning outweighs the myth itself. Today archeologists stand ready to tear down the finest monuments in the Forum in order to lay bare the Cloaca Maxima. I beg to be excused from studying origins and contemplating the seed and the egg, so that I may devote myself to the full adult beauty." This is the demand of a sensible and civilized man; it is a justifiable protest since public neglect of the classics has been overcompensated by the scholar's neglect of the public. Gide's words do not count, if put against Bérard, as heavily as might appear. Phoenician sailors do not disturb nor confuse the reader's appreciation as Gilbert Murray's expurgators of the Iliad do. Our less romantic era can perfectly well stand the grant of an itinerary to this extraordinary Mediterranean cruise. Bérard is of definite help in fighting against the inferred never-never quality of the poem which has been harmful by inspiring so much gush in the manner of Andrew Lang's sonnets.

But Gide has more to say: "I do not doubt but what the archeologists are right, but they have not explained what happened to these myths in the arts of Greece, nor how, without being in the least altered, and even after the Alexandrine age, they were able to satisfy the most harmonious civilization ever attempted by man. . . . For me these fables are alive. I am not anxious to find out how they originated and I leave their shadowy past to the philologists, but I am enthralled by every part of them that touches and speaks to us. Our whole heritage from Greece is so humanly and divinely natural that it has nourished every age, though always keeping its full substance, its freshness and its endless meaning for the next comer."

Gide's words, which I have quoted from *Un Esprit Non Prévenu*, reach the core of the matter and need no commentary. Homeric criticism has been so confined to the admittedly fascinating study of origins that the reader, seeking to grasp "the full adult beauty" has been misled and deterred from his search. A notable recent exception is Mr. C. M. Bowra's book, *Tradition and Design in the Iliad*. Bérard's indifference to the last half of the Odyssey is a case

in point; it is there that the real poem exists, that the elements of drama and tragedy, which justify or defeat the reputation of the poem, must be found. And no scholar has explained to me the curious apparent waste of time and material that I feel in the books immediately following Odysseus' arrival on Ithaca. I feel sure that the apparent fault is in the eye of the beholder; Bérard's hypothesis of a different poet is too easy a way of putting it back into the poem. The poets and aesthetes have been right in asserting the unity of Homer; the higher critics would be hard pressed to explain the extraordinary forms of artistic psychology that could produce the queer kind of literary collaboration demanded by their hypotheses.

The lack of connection between classical scholarship and the contemporary practice and theory of literature is discouraging. It shows itself plainly, notoriously in all the nonsense that has been written about O'Neill's play. As this separation grows wider it keeps from the classics that audience that would have the most joy and benefit from them. Ezra Pound is able to close the gap in matters of language and style; there are larger issues. It is with no desire to be paradoxical that I state my belief that the most helpful book about Homer in recent years is *Ulysses*.

Even if Victor Bérard was not among the finally elect, he deserves honor among his peers. It is not necessary dolefully to recite *A Grammarian's Funeral;* he was a statesman and a patriot as well as a scholar. M. Albert Thibaudet has paid him good tribute in a recent issue of the *Nouvelle Revue Française*. And if the casual reader picks up the book we are considering he will be entertained and instructed by a lively and interesting man.

LAWRENCE LEIGHTON

PAUL ELMER MORE: MANICHEAN

THE GREEK TRADITION. *By Paul Elmer More. Six volumes. Princeton University Press, Princeton, N. J.* $17.50.

MORE stated his philosophy in *Definitions of Dualism*, published nineteen years ago in Volume VIII of the *Shelburne Essays*. The view of life advocated in *The Greek Tradition* is not essentially different; it is not, however, formulated with the same precision, partly because he has abandoned the mysticism which seemed to be its logical conclusion, and partly because he is speaking through the mouths of Plato and the Greek Fathers and in passages of exposition he slips into phraseology which expresses their opinions rather than his own. It would be interesting to show the difference between neo-humanism and genuine Platonism—a difference which is responsible for many confusions and inconsistencies in these six volumes; but as More is primarily a moralist rather than a historian, it is more appropriate to consider what value his conclusions may have for the modern world.

More builds his philosophy round a dualism inside the human soul between a higher element which is negative and a lower element which is positive. The function of the higher element is to

check and control the various impulses, all of which belong to the lower element. This dualism is the theme of the first two volumes of *The Greek Tradition* and is ascribed to Plato. More occasionally confuses his dualism with the wholly different dualism between mind and matter; but his usual opinion is that the inner check is divine; whether or not it is actually identical with God, it is certainly "absolute good." As for the lower self, his natural tendency is to call it wholly evil; "there is within us," he says, in *Definitions of Dualism*, "a stream of impulses flowing from abyss to abyss, which we call positive evil." Interpreting the Greek tradition, however, and not Indian mysticism, he is compelled to avoid this extreme; the impulses are somehow part of the anagke from which the world was made; this anagke is evil, but God, by checking and controlling it, is making it good.

The purpose of the inner check is happiness. More's real belief seems to be that happiness consists in death. "Certain men have reported," he tells us in *Definitions of Dualism*, "that with the attainment of perfect peace the soul can rise into a state wherein the desires cease altogether, and the other element of consciousness, as the higher self or infinite spirit, abides in blissful liberation . . . We seem sometimes in the hushed serenity of death to look, as it were, upon a visible symbol of the external rest." In general, however, both in *Definitions of Dualism* and in *The Greek Tradition* he accepts a kind of hedonism; happiness consists in checking our impulses in accordance with the law of measure; we learn partly by experience and partly from tradition, how far we may indulge our desires and how far we should control them in order to obtain the maximum of happiness; knowledge of this kind is identical with virtue. It is the function of the moral imagination to objectify this knowledge, so that we may have concrete models for our imitation.

In the first volume of *The Greek Tradition* he thus describes the working of the inner check. "Let me suppose the case of a man before whom liquor is set. On the one side he is drawn by a natural physical craving to drink; on the other side are the considerations of expediency and inexpediency which come to him in a more or less laggard manner from the memory of experience and from the precepts of tradition. If he exercises duly the will to refrain, so as to place himself in a position to form a clear image and judgment of the desirability or undesirability of drinking, he will be acting morally and will be happy; his judgment may be, probably will be, wise as

well as clear, and the act of drinking or not drinking will probably result in pleasure; though there is also the possibility that his judgment may be based on insufficient knowledge, with the result of painful consequences. On the other hand, if he acts without due suspense of judgment, allowing himself to be hurried on by the physical craving or the contrary considerations without a proper balance of motives, and if his judgment is then erroneous, as it probably will be, he will not only suffer pain as a consequence of his action, but will feel that he has acted from self-love, or self-ignorance, and will be miserable accordingly." "The rightness or wrongness, virtue or vice, of a particular act," he tells us in *Definitions of Dualism*, "is determined by the final result in pleasure or pain to the agent as an individual existing amid certain circumstances — that is to say, by the harmonious increase of life or the contrary. If the inner check permits full attention on the part of the agent, he will to the best of his experience choose the act which shall finally result in pleasure, and which is therefore right and virtuous."

Obviously this crude hedonism cannot be identified with Platonism, so in *The Greek Tradition* More admits a qualitative distinction among pleasures; the purpose of the inner check is not the greatest quantity of pleasure but pleasure of the best kind. He talks at length, moreover, about the ethical ideas of justice, temperance and so on, which, in Platonism, were prior to experience and not derived from it; and occasionally defines virtue as likeness to God — though as More's God is "the spirit that denies" and can be defined only in negatives, it is difficult to see how man can become like God except by dying.

We can, I think, trace in More three elements which have imperfectly coalesced: there is his ancestral puritanism, which causes him to recoil from the grosser implications of hedonism; there is the influence of Irving Babbitt, who is, as T. S. Eliot has said, a genuine atheist, basing his morality frankly on experience and not on supernaturalism; and there is his own temperament. Temperamentally More might be called a Manichean; he regards the world of *things*, to which his body and its impulses belong, as wholly evil; he hopes to escape from it either into the peace of death or into mystical communion with God. But in *The Greek Tradition* he renounces mysticism; this is partly because the mystics have usually been monists — and More will have none of any philosophy which glosses over the evilness of evil and resolves his dualism into a higher unity

— and partly because the God of mysticism is described only by negatives and communion with God seems to be akin to annihilation — a conclusion which he can not now accept. (One might reply that because God is *described* only by negatives it does not follow that He *is* negative.) Without mysticism his system becomes oddly illogical: in *The Greek Tradition* he never clearly explains wherein human happiness consists. For heirs of the Graeco-Hebraic tradition there are, I suppose, two possible answers. Either man's function is to be a man, harmonizing all his natural impulses and suppressing none of them; the function of the inner check will then be regulative and the best man will be the man who needs to exercise it least; More occasionally admits that a natural impulse is not ipso facto evil, but he identifies the inner check with positive good, and obviously believes that happiness, not merely the result of using it wisely, accompanies it when it is used at all. The alternative answer is that man's function is to develop that part of himself which is highest at the expense of the rest of his nature; happiness consists in the use of the active reason, and it is best used when man contemplates either himself (with Aristotle) or the God Whom he finds within himself (with Christian mysticism). This, however, is mysticism, which More has renounced. All that we are left with is self-control for its own sake. Obviously self-control is necessary, but equally obviously it must be ancillary to values; we are either naturalists or supernaturalists, and not until we have made this fundamental affirmation can we decide how the inner check should operate. More, however, makes his inner check the highest part of human nature, and though, under Plato's influence, he distinguishes qualitatively between pleasures, he makes no real distinction between impulses. This seems to be his primary error, and can only be explained by attributing it to his temperamental Manicheism. Human nature, to both Greek and Christian, was much more complex than More allows; it was not a simple product of evil impulses and a good inner check; it consisted of a hierarchy of impulses, usually classified in three divisions — body soul and spirit to the neo-Platonists, vegetative sensitive and rational to Aristotle and St. Thomas. All these impulses were good in themselves; any one of them might become evil if it was allowed to grow disproportionately strong. As long as man was imperfect self-control was necessary, to the humanist in order to maintain the harmony of human nature, to the supernaturalist in order that the desires of the spirit, which were infinite, might find their proper object, which

was God. This is the orthodox European tradition, and it differs completely from More's Manicheism. It might be added that the recovery of this threefold division of human nature, and of a corresponding threefold *discontinuity* in the cosmos between matter life and spirit is, as T. E. Hulme was the first to realize, the true refutation of romanticism; the romantic error is to seek in the sensible world for the satisfaction of impulses which belong to a wholly different order of being. More's main object, presumably, is to destroy romanticism, and we can be grateful to him and to Professor Babbitt for pointing out so emphatically that until recently all civilized persons were agreed on the necessity of self-control; but in practice More's deification of the inner check leads merely to another kind of romantic nostalgia.

After a volume, mainly historical and much the best in the series, on the Hellenistic philosophies, More turns to Christianity, and in his last three volumes attempts to show that it is the logical consequence of the dualism which he ascribes to Plato. It would be interesting to know why More has accepted Christianity; one is tempted to suggest that his mysticism, baulked of its proper fruition, is breaking out in a different direction. There seem to be two reasons why Christianity has an especially strong appeal for the twentieth century: we have been driven to despair of human nature; and we realize that all our values are given us by tradition and that the vitality of our particular tradition has always come from the Catholic faith. More, however, by no means despairs of human nature; each individual has his inner check, which is identical with, or at least given by, God. The evil in the world is not caused by a fundamental perversion of the human will, to be cured only by supernatural grace, but by the stubborness of the anagke out of which God has made it. The evil in human nature is not sin but "effeminate slackness." More, therefore, has no need for grace, and, though he does not explicitly deny original sin, his interpretation of it is not orthodox. As for tradition, he is much more heretical than any of the modernists whom he attacks; he casts overboard for different reasons Aristotle, Plotinus, St. Paul, St. Augustine, and St. Thomas, and reconstructs Christianity afresh with the Incarnation as its only dogma. He himself gives two reasons for his conversion, if we can call it such. In the first place, there is need for a supernatural world and an after life in order that virtue and happiness may be made identical; in this life the virtuous man, if unfortunate, can only by an abuse of language be called happy.

This, as More's shows, was Plato's conclusion; but what More never points out is that it is utterly inconsistent with the hedonism which he shares with Babbitt and which he advocates in the first volume of this series; either the purpose of morality is to make men happy in this world, in which case unhappiness proves merely that the morality is wrong, or else the laws of morality are transcendental and not empirical, which destroys the whole humanistic philosophy. More's second reason for adopting Christianity is that he sees in Christ the embodiment of dualism; He is that concrete example of perfection, which, in Platonism, had to be constructed for the guidance of the inner check by the moral imagination. He therefore accepts the Incarnation, and rebuilds Christianity from the writings of St. John, St. Athanasius, and the Cappadocians. He bases his faith on the formula drawn up by the Council of Chalcedon. But, in spite of More's claim to orthodoxy, it is highly improbable that St. Athanasius and the Cappadocians would have accepted him as a brother in the faith. In his volume on *The Christ of the New Testament* he avoids modernism by becoming a Nestorian; he separates the two natures; Christ sometimes speaks as a fallible Jewish Messiah, sometimes as the Son of God; it is apparently left to the judgment of the individual Christian to distinguish between the two kinds of utterance. As for the notion that Christ is the embodiment of dualism, one can only make sense of it, and of these six volumes as a whole, by assuming that More's real Christology is similar to that of Apollinarius of Laodicea; the Christ of Apollinarius, as of More, was not perfect man and perfect God perfectly combined; He was the body of a man allied to the reason of God. More's Christ is a human body with human impulses combined with a divine inner check. How Christ differs from Socrates, except by being perfectly what Socrates aspires to be imperfectly, is not explained; Socrates also has a divine inner check, and apart from this inner check consists merely of carnal impulses. The truth is that More can not accept the orthodox Christ without abandoning the whole of his dualism; he would have to admit either that man has a positive spirit with positive impulses in addition to his divine inner check, or that the inner check itself is not divine but fallible and perverted by sin and needs to be saved by supernatural grace, obedience to authority, and the example of God and man miraculously united in one person. Historical Christianity was monistic and declared that the whole of human nature, body as well as soul, would be restored to its original perfection — a restora-

tion exemplified in Jesus Christ and to be accomplished through the instrumentality of the sacraments.[1]

More is an uncompromising enemy of romantic liberalism; he is, therefore, on the side of civilization, and, as such, is at least preferable to John Dewey and *The New Republic*. But it is most unfortunate that he should have attached his criticism to such an extraordinary view of human nature, pieced together out of his own intuitions and the remnants of his ancestral puritanism. Even if we can not accept, in this generation, religious revelation, we shall still find in the psychology of Catholicism a hierarchy of values which gives us the best moral guidance that we can hope for. Its cosmology is monistic — as it must be unless it were, like More's, both Manichean and frankly irrational; yet it by no means minimizes evil. And if it finds in some kind of mysticism the highest experience possible to man, it does not result in annihilation or antinomianism or purposeless asceticism. Human nature and the natural world are the creation of God, and therefore beautiful, but they have been partially spoilt because man is too proud to obey authority and because of his inordinate desire after worldly goods. This is the core of the Catholic faith and of the tradition which we inherit.

HENRY BAMFORD PARKES

[1] The main cause of heresy throughout the history of Christianity has been the belief, which More holds, that the soul of man, not merely *like* God, is *of the same substance* as God; it is therefore unaffected by original sin, and, having an innate capacity for religious truth, does not need an authoritative church. This belief has usually accompanied a monism verging on pantheism, as in Plotinus and (most recently) in Emerson. It was associated with dualism in a number of early semi-Christian sects. These sects usually held heretical beliefs about Christ, making Him a deified man rather than a union of man and God.

ARMS AND MEN

CONQUISTADOR. *By Archibald MacLeish. Houghton Mifflin Co. Boston.* 1932. $2.50.

THE author of the lines, —

"We too, we too, descending once again
The hills of our own land, we too have heard
Far off — Ah, que ce cor a longue haleine —
The horn of Roland in the passages of Spain, . . ."

and of

"Think that this silver snail the moon will climb
All night upon time's curving stalk, . . ."

and of *You, Andrew Marvell*, and the verses that end

"You will not remember this at all you will stand there
Feeling the wind on your throat the wind in your sleeves
You will smell the dead leaves in the grass of a garden
You will close your eyes With whom you will say ah where"

has written in *Conquistador* a poem which is the finest consecutive narrative since *The Ring and the Book*, the single narrative worthy of the inheritance by an American, and what is far more important, a poem which is a rehabilitation of a language, raising new standards in symbols and reasserting the idea of heroism. Incidentally *Conquistador* is a monument of metric, a treasure house for quotation and indestructible testimony to the fact that whoever are the half dozen living poets, MacLeish must be considered one.

In his six published volumes he has emerged from the echoes of his education, through the scholarship of preceding and contemporary practitioners of his craft to an intensified personal

quality, increasingly free from private association, towards the anonymous artistry of action. Up to the present his subjects have been that of much verse; — the praise of seasons, one's lovers, one's selves — a romantic lyricism of peoples and places. Keats never exhausted this subject matter, fortuitously or not, nor have any of the minor lyrists in English. Shakespeare and Donne have surely penetrated into it to the essence of human heat and cold; but it is exhaustible. After a young man is sick of himself, his loves, his hates, there are two or three aspects of experience left for him to correspond and describe, — geography, the praise of nature, and the histories of men in the earth. They are, by record, the subject matter of great poetry.

If one once considered the essential personal quality of MacLeish as nostalgia, a regret for times lost, places missed, the difficulty of a poet, as a poet, in a new land in a hard time, or the frustration of human relations, one can no longer so judge him. For *Conquistador* proves him not a poet as a man of letters, but a poet as a man of action occupied in the praise of arms and men.

The story of *Conquistador*, roughly, is the story of the first conquest of Mexico by the Spanish under Cortés. It is not a complete history. It glorifies no one person. By a device of great ingenuity this progress of men is conceived with consummate selectivity. In fragments, in shifting facets one constructs for oneself the multiple whole, which no complete documentation full of all incidental detail could ever have combined to do.

For, years after the Conquest, back in his own country and an old veteran, Bernál Díaz del Castillo, one of the conquerors, sick of the official volumes, writes his "True History of the Conquest of New Spain." *Conquistador* is what the old man remembers. He presupposes the well-known part of the history. His contribution is his own experience, the actual soul of the conquest, which can never be fused into a mere historian's synthesis.

The Prologue opens with Bernál invoking the past, and the dead file before him in a faint, aching procession, — a catalogue of dead fighters, each framed by two or three lines of isolating clarity, stating the few facts which have set them years afterwards in this old soldier's memory, which will set them in Time's forever; — Sándoval, Alvarádo, Olíd, Oléa, and at the end — in a single line of superb reticence, —

This is Cortés that took the famous land:

And Bernál continues his recollection, "That which I have myself seen and the fighting . . ." and he says that he is an ignorant man and it is hard for him to write if too easy to remember, and he records the names of towns, the start of the conquest — stiffly and percisely with the absolute precision of an old ship's chart, adorned but never merely decorated with the tiny details of his life and adventures, his dolphins and sea serpents in its embellished border.

One can have only the utmost admiration for Bernál as MacLeish has erected him. The old man drones on, almost in a monotony of remembrance until an event will overwhelm him, . . . a fragment, a shattered image, a forgotten word, a mumbled line and then the sharp, tacit quirt of memory. Not riches, not the rewards of honor impressed the old soldier. Indeed he slurs over many events which might have called forth resplendent descriptions; — the meeting with Montezuma or the final triumph. Bernál has the professional soldier's cold-blooded interest in the technique and conduct of warfare. He recalls the harshest of the fighting, the worst of the pain, the real panic of retreat and more vaguely, the alien paradise he enjoyed for a moment and never knew why he lost. The Aztec sacrifices, the ceremonials made little dent in his mind. After all, he had the mythology of Catholicism to support him and the heathen belief was as incomprehensible as the infidel religion of the Moors. Bernál uses a technical or particular expression in its proper sense, his talk has that quality of intrinsic fascination that the shop-talk of aviators, or engineers or sailors have, when they assume your equal interest in their affairs.

Indeed the whole language of *Conquistador* is remarkable. MacLeish never for a second forgets who his narrator is, though he never directly describes him, and the soldier's diction is a smelting together of that tongue which we have come to know as the traditional poets' with a middle tongue of the common man's, a slight suggestion that the original of his history is in a foreign speech, that the Spanish is an antique Spanish, and that the old soldier is a humble ignorant fellow who sometimes feels the necessity of aping the scholars', the historians' flourish which had "the school taught skip to their writing."

And among many other extraordinary things MacLeish has done with words, perhaps his most immediate innovation is a rehabilitation of certain adjectives which with inert use have had their edges worn away; — "*famous* city," "*fortunate* wars,"

"*solemn* hands," "and they had no *ease* at all in that war and no *joy* of it," "gallows of wood and a *good* jail," "the whole thing was a very *beautiful* victory." He invests them with a new-to-us virtue, and restores their original usefulness.

Conquistador has a supple unity in its flexible linear design. Bernál tells his story by what MacLeish chooses to make him remember and the form of his line fits the mood of the memory. He can start the poem with an invocation to his muse, he can shift the cadence to an evocation, the actual summoning up of ghosts with his own breath, and by shortening the metre shift to a declamatory, vocative address, fused in between the various stages of the march of history. He can suggest prose in the verse not ever by being prosaic but by a change from the stricter rhythm to an almost legal cadence of formal writ, a lean piling up of facts, facts necessary but unadorned. For example, the poem ends with a movement like the coda of a symphony. That word of metal, "*Conquistador*," is sounded or struck and left to vibrate in the silence of its broken line. Then follows the dignity of the downward turn, the narration not quite over but its end in sight, a recapitulation, a short development in reconsideration of the whole work, and then the three consecutive phrases as the final emphatic chords that swiftly terminate, define and inscribe forever the past resounding tale —

That well swept town that island and those towers . . .

MacLeish's diction is his own gift and forging. He has, through many years of creation, submitted himself to a discipline. The greater variety of line length and freedom of metre in his earlier works have been smouldered down to a damascened length of variety, color, flexibility but essential and indestructible unity. First and foremost the line of *Conquistador* recalls not an English but an Italian poet —

". . . 'Piú non si desta
Di qua dal suon de l'angelica tromba,
Quando verrà la nimica podesta:
Ciascun rivederà la trista tomba,
Ripiglierà sua carne e sua figura,
Udirà quel che in eterno rimbomba!"

(Inferno VI)

"Of that worlds conquest and the fortunate wars:
Of the great report and expectation of honor:
How in their youth they stretched sail: how fared they

Westward under the wind . . ."

"How they were dead and driven and endured:
How they returned with arms in the wet month:
How they destroyed that city: and the gourds. . . ."

One cannot fail to mark the compact carillion of *R* sounds in the Dante, the *R*s and the *AN*s and the *RA*s and the bell-boomings of the *BA*s, and in *Conquistador* the *R*s and *RD*s and the fatal *D*s. The Italian has of course a closeness of texture, a compact swiftness that the English lacks either because of the failure of a similar declension in our tongue or the differing times in which the poets write. This is not to suggest that MacLeish is attempting a sublimated Italian. He never strains English into the bastard Mediterannean melodies of a Swinburne or the sinuous, feminine cadence of French overtones that since the Nineteenth Century have softened what MacLeish himself called "the Iron of English." *Conquistador*, if anything, sounds like an Anglo-Saxon language. With the discipline of his admiration for Dante, MacLeish knows also the *Seafarer* and, from that wonderful translation of Ezra Pound's, one finds an inkling of a source of MacLeish's line.

"May I for my own self song's truth reckon,
Journey's jargon, how I in harsh days
Hardship endured oft.
Bitter breast-cares have I abided,
Known on my keel many a care's hold,
And dire sea-surge, . . ."

and then *Conquistador*, without the inversions, or the overtone of a transcribed tongue:

"Stiff in the smoking chocks: in the chains: and the airs
Swung east and the swells came in on the quarter
Kicking her off: and we held her down as he dared:

So it went: and the fourth day and to starboard
A low line like the blur of the wind on the sea
And we worked her in with the oared boats to that harbor."

Conquistador is written in a form of terza-rima, though often there is no rhyme. Occasionally the last syllables rhyme, often the penultimates reëcho and there is unremitting use of strict nets of dissonance and assonance with a skill and subtlety hardly ever before so consciously or successfully risked in the history of modern Eng-

lish prosody. A quoted portion with an italicized analysis will serve better than any description to show the extraordinary architecture of its ingenuity, —

"And this Professor Francisco Lopez de *Gó*mara	a
Childless; not poor: and I am old: over *eight*y:	b
Stupid with sleepless nights: unused to the *comb*ing of	a
Words clean of the wool while the tale w*ait*s:	b
And he is a youthful man: a sound one: l*ight*ened with	c
Good sleep: skilled in the pen's pl*ait*ing —	b
I am an ignorant old sick man: bl*i*nd with the	c
Shadow of death on my face and my h*an*ds to l*ead* me:	d e
And he not ignorant: not sick —	
but *I*	c
Fought in those battles! These were my own d*eed*s!	d
These names he writes of mouthing them out as a m*an* would	e
Names in Herodotus — dead and their wars to r*ead* —	d
These were my friends: these dead my comp*an*ions:	e
I: Bernál Díaz: called del Cas*til*lo:	f
Called in the time of my first fights El Gal*án*:	e
I here in the turn of the day in the f*eel* of	f
Darkness to come now: moving my chair with the ch*an*ge:	e^1
Thinking too much these times how the doves would wh*eel* at	f
Evening over my youth and the air's str*an*geness:"	e^2

The rhyme is employed, dropped, recalled in echo, and dropped again to be resumed in its recurrent association like the refrain of a song. *Conquistador* is not a poem to be looked at, but to be read aloud.

MacLeish is, of course, drenched in the documentation of the period and yet he is never seduced by the temptations of decorative detail. He only records the exact image that has a direct bearing on the people of the Sixteenth Century in relation to the weather of their locale. The images are not necessarily referable or comprehensible to us at first glance. But there is no concession in attempting to "modernize" the Spaniards or the Aztecs for our easier consumption. They exist in this poem as much as the Chinese of Pound's *Cathay*, waiting for us to release them into the

activity of our imagination by the slight flattery of an undivided attention.

In addition to the talents of his narrative sweep, and his powers as a technician MacLeish has the added gift of a penetrating, persistent attention to the quintessential activities of a natural event, the quality as it were, of individuation. He can express the essence of a particular kind of air; for example, the very weather for sailing:

"Winter it was and a wind and a swell rolling

And the stain of the foam on the long flank of the swells:
And they gave us the signals for night with the swung lanterns
And the chains came in: foul with the tatters of kelp:

And the bow fell off from the wind and the sails slatted:
Shaking aloft: filling the bunt:"

or when Cortés has to make a decision

"Pursing the nib of a No on his lip:"

or describing the arid bareness of the country —

"I say that the whole country moved as on the
Cloudy steel the image of hands passes over:"

or at the end, before the last retreat —

"And we lined up in the dark court and the straws were
Drawn by candle: and we saw the rain for the
Flame spat to the wick:"

These images are hardly ever merely visual but almost always audibly relevant. They spell the sounds they mean. And combined with his exhaustion of the descriptive possibilities in nature, MacLeish can isolate the core of physicality, the interior essential fluid of men in violent action, which is the spring of action, stronger than almost any poet save the great Greeks, Dante and Shakespeare. He can expose the raw nerve to the air, he can exhaust the mind's concept of fatigue into actual lassitude by wrenching an image from a pierced or anguished body so that the divisions of the poem come as a relief, and a blank page is a real rest.

". . . and the roll of the
Drums like the thud in the ear of a man's heart. . . ."

. . . "— Screwing the
Sneer in the twist of his teeth:"

. . . "their bellies like knuckles of bronze"

"And the earth for the odor of men in its hot days —
For a woman's color of pink shell on the pock of the
Purple vein at breast as a bruise made in it."

It is a fable of the necessity for action in adventures of adversity, in the maintenance of an interest after all satisfaction in it had ceased and only a greater consciousness can be gained by further perseverence. It is the tragedy of the self-betrayal of the human will, the failure of the human organism itself, by its own mortality, of the pioneer's dignity in tragedy when he is aware enough to know that the pattern of his destiny is larger than his capacity to conquer it, but who always behaves even in the ultimate fatality with the gallantry of a conqueror. "Our lives are brief, noble and tragic," this poet has written in another poem.

MacLeish, not only by his gifts and talents but also by the implicit attitude of an undefined philosophy, deserves comparison with the two others of our chief contemporary poet-philosophers. In Pound's *Cantos* there is a consistent attitude towards a lyric correspondence. In Eliot's *Ash Wednesday* and in *Conquistador* there are consistent examples towards a method of behavior.

Pound is a lyric, rather than a philosophic poet and the philosophy implicit in his sense of the fusion of time and times is a lyric attitude, a personal frame, a frame which too often comes first before the reader. It has more to do with the tradition of poetry than with the poetry of life. To Eliot and Pound the suggestions for their attitudes have come from the nurture of abstract thought or the activity of their intelligences in cerebration. The battles of the mind are no less muscular or tiring or even rewarding than the battles of physical imagery in action, only perhaps to us of a younger generation they have become enervating.

In short, MacLeish's religion is the hero's belief in the possibility of a hero. "I am well aware that in these days hero-worship, the thing I call hero-worship, professes to have gone out and finally ceased. . . . But I liken common languid times, with their unbelief, distress, perplexity, with their languid doubting characters and embarrassed circumstances, impotently crumbling down into ever worse distress towards final ruin; — all this I liken to dry

dead fuel, waiting for the lightning out of Heaven that shall kindle it. . . . For myself in these days, I seem to see in this indestructibility of hero-worship the everlasting adamant lower than which the confused wreck of revolutionary things cannot fall." Whether or not we can tolerate this ninety-two year old optimism of Carlyle, whether we believe a hero is a divinity, a prophet, a poet, priest or king, a belief in the existence of the hero at all is still more valuable than the opposite.

To have written *Conquistador* is to have erected a monument to the possibility of heroism. It is an act of faith in the belief of poetry and human action, on a grand scale, again.

LINCOLN KIRSTEIN

LAND AND TRADITION

PENHALLY. *By Caroline Gordon. Charles Scribner's Sons. New York.* 1931.

SOME societies seem to exist to receive their consecration in art. Sterile in their youth, with their years spent, on the verge of extinction, like Hannah they flower late. Their shadowy partial day enjoys a sunset glory. Puritan New England was such a society. With its distinctive principles in decay it found in Hawthorne its scribe. What escaped the factual, the mechanical, the routine, and attained the stature of choice and purpose Hawthorne retold and in the retelling preserved of New England Puritanism its inevitable form. The old South was such another society. Manners, conversation, cooking, oratory, and politics flourished, but like the theology of New England they testify to a certain incompleteness of life. They are enclosed, protected from the elements, like a ship in a bottle. Their movements, their combats, the unfolding of their lives give the impression of artificiality, like the blossoming of paper Japanese flowers in water. To be fully appreciated such a society must be shown in the enchantment of distance, as tenderly dwelt on as memories of childhood, a childhood none too rich in games and journeys, but contented and free from envy. When this is done we have *Penhally*. *Penhally* might be called the epic of one section of the south, but it is an epic in miniature, in scale with the life of which it is a memorial. Three generations of two families, the Llewellyns and the Crenfrews, on a thousand acres of land in Tennessee decorate without in the least crowding its two hundred and eighty-three pages. They compose in these pages, and represent a truth of which in real life, like the society of Proust, they were unconscious.

The history of *Penhally* opens with a quarrel between the two brothers Nicholas and Ralph. "'Brother' Ralph had said that day at dinner: 'A man likes to live in his own house.'" The quarrel was never made up; only twice after did they meet for a moment's exchange. But the quarrel was not the beginning of a feud; Charles, Ralph's son, was welcome at *Penhally;* his daughter Lucy married John, old Nicholas' heir. The significance of the quarrel belongs to

another level, deeper than flesh and blood boiling in rage, less infantile than the retaliation of hurt pride. Nicholas represents unity, the continuance of tradition, the submission of one's individuality to an order which is the soil of special virtues. As Chance, who exemplifies the virtues of old Nicholas in the third part of *Penhally* reflects: "There was something about entailing property. It made a man feel that he was not really the owner, or at least that he had heavy obligations to his successor. He had noticed that about his own grandfather. He was sure that the old fellow — and he was the best man of the whole caboodle — had never regarded himself as owning a stick or stone. When he made any changes on the place, cut down a piece of timber or anything like that, he would say, 'I *think* that will be all right,' reflectively, as if he were appealing to the verdict of somebody else. And he had made his son, Chance's father, entail the property on his eldest son as soon as he came of age. . . ." Ralph on the other hand represents the squandered enjoyment of a lifetime, without regard to principle, dissipation of capital, and descendants. Ralph dies, his land mortgaged to Nicholas, who reassembles the family property. But though *Penhally* is about this symbolic conflict between Nicholas and Ralph they do not figure large in its pages. Part I, the longest of the three parts, takes us from 1826 through the Civil War. There is the wonderful scene of John and Alice swimming their horses across the swollen stream, the family dinner where old Nicholas' eye musingly traverses each face at the table to rest finally on John's to establish him as his heir, the rivalry of John and Charles for Alice, the war. Part II carries us through the death hush of reconstruction, Llewellyns and Crenfrews wasting on the wounded land. Part III is contemporary. Chance and Emily, to whom he is engaged, alone retain the love for the land. "That day last summer when he had stood there beside her, pointing out the different fields, she had understood, for the first time, really how he felt about this place. He had no sentimental feeling about the house, or about the fact that his people had lived here for several generations. It was the land he loved, the very particles of the red clay. It was some special kind of red clay — she could not even remember the name now. Only two per cent of the earth's surface was like that, Chance said. He was proud of the fact that the Llewellyns had their share of it!" Nick, his elder brother, took no interest in farming. He had prospered as a banker. But the land was entailed on him. His wife, Phyllis, indifferent to the customs and rites of family, to the negroes and the land, was taken up

with the Parrishes. Parrish was eager to settle there: indifferent to his riches he was learned about the Indians and *Penhally*, where his mother in girlhood had lived. But Joan, his wife, worried by wealth and ambitions, desired to buy *Penhally* as part of a hunt club. Nick pleased with the price offered and unable to decline the possibility of contacts with eastern bankers consents and sells. At the first dance at *Penhally*, now a club, Chance, taunted by Nick, shoots him. The quarrel between Nicholas and Ralph is concluded.

Peopled as *Penhally* is, filled with incidents, the characters do not jostle, the scenes do not blur. So fine is the tone and craftsmanship that the book holds together like a Bellini; the figures existing precisely in relation to the background of roofs and mountains. *Penhally* is written from love, the love of one to whom *Penhally*, its history and people, are as real as legend and folklore and anecdote lived with from childhood, till finally they become indistinguishable from the events of one's life, and even more vivid. As an Egyptian head of the Old Dynasty will have more life than the people in the museum about it, so the characters of *Penhally* shadow their descendants. But Caroline Gordon presents these familiar heroes of childhood in their human proportions. Her feeling for them does not obscure her perceptions. I think it is this union of ancestral piety with the novelist's precise and undeviating eye which gives *Penhally* its special quality and surrounds it with that space of silence which is the property of every work of art. Of the art there can be no doubt. The scenes which open and close each part frame them with the special design of the period and yet form a triptych of a single pattern. Each part sounds its individual theme, of a tone and tempo peculiarly its own, and each theme is but a variation of the basic theme of *Penhally*. Book I begins with a quarrel and ends with the death of Charles. But it is informed with a vitality and leisure and hope absent from Book II of the post-war years. This book opens with O'Donnell on his death bed and ends with his death. Thirty-five years pass like the fitful fatigued stirrings of a dying man's memory. Book III is more agitated and violent, like the crash of a great hollow cane tree. It begins with the Negro Russ in jail for murder. It explodes with Chance's private forlorn Thermopolae, the shooting of Nick. The explosion is perhaps a trifle too loud and abrupt; Chance's fury is foolhardy and lacks the almost deliberate calm justice of old Nicholas when he shoots the Yankee officer tormenting a woman. Possibly if Nick had been drawn in darker colors and had been more strenuous in provoking Chance one would not

feel that here alone a certain literal and psychological verisimilitude had been violated to provide for aesthetic symmetry and moral rightness. Elsewhere the technique with such a minor exception as the placing of the incident of the Roder poor-whites is masterly.

Caroline Gordon's method of narrative is as effective as her attitude and craftsmanship in presenting her vision of *Penhally*. Her piety wins the reader's sympathy, her surgical tenderness exposes every nerve of her subject uninjured. Her style reveals the nature of each character's mind and the quality of their actions. The method of extending each action into the past through reflections in the minds of the characters gives each character a richness not possessed by himself alone and violence a plastic immobility. The panels of present action slide back in the mind to open on the past of recollection. But the mood established is not one of revery, of that contemplation of the past for the sake of its poetry which is common in certain phases to the later James, Proust and Joyce. Nor is it the mood of decision which ensues when action is poised on the springboard of memory. The mood is more of reminiscence, a sort of waking trance, where the past flows parallel to the present without affecting it, as one sees two Alpine streams of brown and blue join and for a time flow on without merging. This method of presentation and its resultant mood is so important that one can only do it justice by quoting.

"The horses' feet crunched on gravel. The boy was slipping down. They were at the ford. The river was black and swollen with winter rains. Flora had quivered all over when the water struck her ankles, but she was moving steadily forward. A good mare. Her great-great-granddam was Gunpowder's filly out of Starlight. . . . When you bred a Gunpowder stallion you got long, strong legs, powerful hindquarters, but weak eyes. She was a bad mount at night. She shied at every rock. A piece of paper blown into a fence corner would send her dancing. But she had the good long legs. She was swimming now, with short, resolute strokes. An easy motion, like Rock-a-bye-baby in the tree tops. . . . If you could forget that your legs were cased in ice. There *was* ice in the river. Little cakes went floating by every now and then, but this river never froze solid. . . . Unless it was in 1926. They had had snow in every month but one that year. . . . The water was as yet not above his knees, and they must be over the worst. That black bar ahead was the line of trees on the opposite bank. They *must* be in the middle of the river by this time. It was all right as long as only your legs were numb. If you went numb to the waist you might fall over in the saddle, face forward as like as not, and then you could drown, before anybody knew what had happened. A fine end for a raider! *Drowned*,

crossing a ford. He put his hand in his pocket and took out the locket that had Alice's picture in it. She had given it to him that last night. She had known then, probably, that she was going to marry Charles! He cast the locket by its velvet ribbon into the water. Black, strongly flowing water was the place for such a keepsake. He would not send it back to her. It meant nothing, nothing to her and nothing to him. He would not send it back. . . ."

In this passage one sees the various levels within the structure of *Penhally*. There is the level of present action, crossing the ford; then there is the wider action, the war of which the crossing is a part; further there is the drift of thought, Alice, unrelated to the present except by association; and finally the background of memory, *Penhally* represented by Gunpowder. Deepest of these levels is *Penhally*. Transition is made abruptly from character to character, the course of action interrupted, not primarily to resume other actions, but because everything, character, anecdote, legend, action, the episodes of war and peace, is designed to present *Penhally*. It is for the sake of the life realized by people on a thousand acres of entailed land in Tennessee that the fortunes of three generations are chronicled. But one feels something equivocal in this life: it is isolate and stranded, and yet has the false assurance of completeness. This equivocal aspect of *Penhally*, its geographical immutability, its architecture, its kin and their genealogy, passions and deeds, all substance with the soil as its red clay on the one hand, and the suggestion of a larger, more heroic life which is never theirs on the other, gives the clue to the unique quality of Caroline Gordon's vision. One can approach it through an analysis of her point of view, of her tone which is a combination of the artist's spare accurate selection, with the patriot's love of home and country, a love such as the Socrates of the Crito felt for Athens, and Jeremiah for Jerusalem and the people of Israel. One can approach this quality again through an analysis of her style. That bare economic exact prose which couples present narrative with reminiscence of the past so that the present action takes on a richness which it does not rightfully possess. One can approach it once more by examining the peculiar content of her characters' memories. What is peculiar about them is the abrupt sharp curtain they drop at a certain point across the past. Lucy, Chance's grandmother,

"was not interested in her ancestors. Life, for her, seemed to have stopped with the Civil War. She could not conceive of places more magnificent than Mayfield or Penhally in their palmy days, of a gentleman finer than her

own father. Old Uncle Nick she had it in for, because he had gypped her father out of his property, but the mantle of those days had even begun to descend on his shoulders. If you asked her questions about people farther back than those days she said impatiently, 'Oh, I d'know,' and the thought in her mind was that it made no difference."

Old Nicholas' memory was not so consciously disinherited. The images and fables that occupied it were those of a pioneer. If his reflections extend to Virginia they only accentuate his voluntary exile.

"It would have been better, Nicholas reflected, if Tom Jefferson had confined himself to science, instead of setting the whole country agog with his half-baked political theories. Virginia, indeed, was in a parlous state. A man could not, actually, entail his property on his own children's children! That was one reason why his grandfather, Robert Llewellyn, had approved of his son's coming West. Virginia, he said, was breaking up under their eyes; it would be better to leave and settle in a new country."

The exodus from Virginia reminds one of the escape from life and from authority, the instinct for death that D. H. Lawrence found in the Pilgrim fathers and their successors.

For the impression that insistently forces itself upon one is that of an impoverished and marooned society. Interested as these islanded people are in the past, their genealogy is recent. It does not stretch back to indefinite distances as Heroditus found among the Egyptian priests, or to an ultimate Old Testament creation, or to a Greek descent from the gods. If the past hardly operates in *Penhally*, the present contributes little more. *Penhally* was too small, not to mention too new, to constitute a city state, too anchored and protected to grow by contact and warfare like the tribes of Israel. The Civil War found old Nicholas as detached from the South as from the North. His gods inhabited his plantation alone. Hence *Penhally* as one finally sees it is a land patient and generous whose unity never found a corresponding unity among the people who settled it. The Llewellyns and Crenfrews invested it with no tradition, and cultivated it to no final human forms. Their society is like the younger of two brothers, the crippled prosaic one who has survived the death of his more brilliant senior. His parents know him for what he is but they bestow on him all the affection and love intended for the life that might have been. Caroline Gordon has given us *Penhally* in its meagre life and that its people should move us so and remain so vivid in our memories is but the greater tribute to the consecration of her art.

BERNARD BANDLER II

AN ENGLISH SYMBOLIST

THE WAVES, *By Virginia Woolf. Harcourt Brace. New York.* 1931. $2.50.

IN A little essay entitled *Mr. Bennet and Mrs. Brown* (published as a Hogarth pamphlet in 1924), Virginia Woolf describes her own revolt against English naturalism. Her elders, she affirms, have taught her nothing valuable about the technique of creating character. They have grown indignant about the social system and they have assembled admirable descriptions of man's earthly possessions, but they have added nothing to the knowledge of the soul. When Mr. Bennett wishes to describe Hilda Lessways he talks about the house she lives in, the view from the window or the clothes she wears. In consequence Mr. Bennet and his kind were to be politely relinquished as a bad example by the generation of 1910 to whom property no longer seemed the symbol of an enduring attitude toward life.

Seldom has a novelist revealed more consciously the influences which have contributed to the perfection of a literary method than Mrs. Woolf in her discussions of the masters whom she has found worthy of study. Starting with the rejection of her immediate ancestors, she returned to the English literary past in search of better tools. It was natural, in view of a certain feminist tendency, a belief in the potentialities of women which was a part of the twentieth century atmosphere, that she should be attracted to Jane Austin. In the novels of the latter she found a vindication of feminine insight and an illuminating irony which she set about mastering. Besides this there was between them a bond of conservatism. Neither cared for raw passion or sought new and dangerous material; both were content with restrained comment. The novels of Mrs. Woolf's first period, *Night and Day* and *The Voyage*

Out, both in style and attitude bear the imprint of this initial apprenticeship. Later, in *Mrs. Dalloway*, from a new point of view, she employed the same indulgent ironies.

She was not satisfied, however, with her earliest attempt at style. If she had learned how to choose essentials, an innate lyric impulse rebelled at the somewhat dry symbols of her nineteenth century predecessor. The more alertly sensuous modern had also the example of poetic concentration in the Elizabethan dramatists. That the seventeenth century feeling for words impressed her is evident though she resolutely rejected the possibilities of dramatic situation. In this transition period the work of Proust acted as a stimulus to her already apparent interest in consciousness, in the part played by memory and the idea of time in the drama of interior life. Her use of a kind of internal monologue accentuated the elegaic mood as in the following quotation from *Jacob's Room* which might serve as a keynote to all of her mature work.

"And what can this sorrow be? It is brewed by the earth itself. We start transparent, and then the cloud thickens. All history backs our pane of Glass. To escape is vain."

She, too, has felt a need for a more spiritual quality, a need which has driven some twentieth century writers back to the organized church. There are, however, two possibilities in such a reaction from materialism. One is the acceptance of authority and the certainties of religious discipline, and the other, more agreeable to minds distrustful of dogma and imbued with scientific scepticism, is the exploration of consciousness, a reliance upon the emotional experience resulting from sensation. The latter course is typical of many of the French symbolists to which Virginia Woolf corresponds; in Holland it produced a movement "sensitivism" whose name is sufficiently descriptive. Such subjective experience, if intense, is in reality a kind of "mystical feeling" which is highly lyric and capable of various interpretations. In some natures it produces cynicism and despair (Eliot, Waste Land period; in Flanders, Van de Woestyne), in others (and this category includes Virginia Woolf) a fluctuating attitude, at times a pantheistic certainty of kinship with the universe, at times merely nostalgia. It seems also possible that religious mysticism proper is an analogous type of "mystical feeling" organized into a system from which certain deductions, considered to be objective truths, are drawn. Symbolist writers, on the other hand, are content with a lesser amount of organization, their preoccupation is with the choice of

symbols which shall communicate their experience most adequately to the reader, a process common to most successful lyric poetry of any age.

Jacob's Room is the novel in which transitional processes are most apparent. In it she has not abandoned the description of externals, but she is already attempting to realize a central spiritual reality through the awareness of her characters. Though she may still be circumscribed literally by the tea-table and the hearth, the teacups are not what they seem to the casual eye. The process which follows, a gradual elimination of purposeful actions and a rejection of all externals as objects for enumeration does not necessarily imply faithlessness to her original aim, the pursuit of character, rather it is a continuation of her revolt against Mr. Bennet and a new conception of the essence of character. Her people are no longer the machines of determinism, whose functioning may be mapped with complete accuracy.

In the development of Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway* indicates a freshening of the satiric interest and a renewed loyalty to Jane Austin, while *To the Lighthouse* is a complete abandonment to symbolism. In this case she has chosen, as a pattern for the book, a trip to the lighthouse which parallels the intangible spiritual quest. The subjective orientation of her new attitude (subjective in relation to each character respectively) implies a lack of direct communication between individuals. The unifying concept in her work is a continual awareness of the passage of time (perhaps Bergsonian influence) which she identifies with consciousness. An attempt to endow this with objective reality results in a double approach. She renders the subjective feelings of her characters against a background of nature description, thus implying a unity between temporal flux in the consciousness of the individual and a similar flux in the outside world.

This is apparent in the structure of her novels. *Orlando* may be disregarded as a kind of historical experiment, another assertion of time-preoccupation. The publication of *The Waves*, however, marks the most significant achievement of the evolution which has just been sketched. In form, the earlier novels exhibit a certain fumbling. *Jacob's Room* is a collection of snapshots employing various camera angles, and the result is diffuse and uncertain. Traces of nature description used contrapuntally begin to appear, however. In *Mrs. Dalloway* the clock is used as a symbol; during the day, into which the action is compressed, its presence is continually stressed. Be-

sides this, the dominance of a major character is a gain in unity. *To the Lighthouse* is split in two by the long description of the deserted house in the country, another attempt to elaborate passage-of-time symbolism. In the new novel, a more definitely musical structure results in greater clarity and simplicity. The consciousness of six people are woven in and out as distinct themes (differentiated by individual leitmotifs) with all minor interests excluded. Passage-of-time symbolism reappears as a series of interludes describing a marine landscape from dawn to nightfall. Thus the sea suggests the time-flux transcending all things and the six lives are *The Waves*, part of the whole yet each a separate minor disturbance. A second symbol, reminiscent of the lighthouse journey, is Percival, to whom they are all joined by bonds of affection and who stands for an emotional certainty which they seek in earthly love.

From this it will be seen that there is in Mrs. Woolf's work a certain conflict between purpose, the desire to reach the lighthouse, to achieve fulfillment through love, and the mystical feeling that time-consciousness in its eternal flux is the only ultimate answer. She has not completely resolved her double time-symbolism into a unity; we are asked to compare subjective sensation with a description of the sea and to draw our own conclusions. Moreover, to her characters, sensual impressions have a value of their own and this immediate quality is what troubles her people, it is what they cannot disregard in accepting the omnipotent time-flux. Percival, too, symbol of love, dies early in the book leaving the others to ponder his loss. The conclusion seems to be that love is a hopeless illusion.

Virginia Woolf has rebelled from the first at the conception of character consisting of a summation of qualities or properties. Assuming it to depend upon a central emotion, an emotion which can only be symbolized lyrically as it encounters the outside world, she considers enumerated detail superficial, translating this central emotion at the core of her people into a special poetic idiom which accounts for the similarity between them which has deceived many of her critics. Just as in the larger significance of her book there is a certain conflict, in her view of character there is a conflict between a sense of individuality (the "I feeling") and the sense of kinship with the universe. This is Rhoda's "I feeling" —

"That is my face . . . in the looking-glass behind Susan's shoulder — that face is my face. But I will duck behind her to hide it, for I am not here. I have no face. Other people have faces; Susan

and Jinny have faces; they are here. Their world is the real world. The things they lift are heavy."

In contrast, the more vital Susan —

"I love and I hate. I desire one thing only. My eyes are hard. Jinny's break into a thousand lights. Rhoda's are like those pale flowers to which moths come in the evening. Yours grow full and brim and never break. But I am already set on my pursuit. I see insects in the grass. Though my mother still knits white socks for me and hems pinafores and I am a child, I love and I hate."

There are six of these individualities. On the other hand the following quotation applies to them all:

"Death is the enemy. It is death against whom I ride with my spear couched and my hair flying like a young man's, like Percival's, when he galloped in India. I strike spurs into my horse. Against you I will fling myself, unvanquished and unyielding, O Death!"

While less profound writers are satisfied with easily exaggerated differences in behavior, Mrs. Woolf has come to believe that the spiritual qualities which make human beings akin are more worthy of attention. And so, while we know that her people react differently in the same situation and have special feelings about themselves, they at the same time assume for us a larger significance.

Her style which has evolved from dry notation to richly sensuous imagery has become an instrument of such power that it is able to overcome the handicap of deficient action and carry the interest forward on waves of interior drama. She has realized new areas of sensitivity and delicate shades of reaction between man and his fellows and the exterior world. In addition she has stated her problem with complete honesty — acceptance of some transcendental ultimate must imply a realization of the unimportance of immediate sensation-values if she cannot attain this certainty through them. There are then only three courses open to her, to remain in the present stage of doubt and conflict, to accept the immediacy of sensation (love, the lighthouse journey, Percival), thus in a sense rejecting her mystical feeling about time, or to develop the latter at the expense of her lyric sensuality. If she chooses the last named course it is doubtful whether her vague, mystical feeling about time, the eternal flux, will be sufficient in its present state. The direction of her evolution suggests that she will not be satisfied with sensation alone. The problem seems to be whether she will be driven to accept the discipline of some form of organized religion.

H. R. Hays

THE NEGRO RENAISSANCE

INFANTS OF THE SPRING. *By Wallace Thurman. Macaulay. New York.* 1932. $2.00.
ONE WAY TO HEAVEN. *By Countee Cullen. Harper & Brothers. New York.* 1932. $2.00.
THE CHINABERRY TREE. *By Jessie Fauset. Stokes. New York.* 1932. $2.00.
HOME TO HARLEM. *By Claude Mackay. Harper's. New York.* 1928. $2.50.
BANJO. *By Claude Mackay. Harper's. New York.* 1929. $2.50.
NOT WITHOUT LAUGHTER. *By Langston Hughes. A. A. Knopf. New York.* 1930. $2.50.

"BEING a Negro writer in these days is a racket and I'm going to make the most of it while it lasts. I find queer places for whites to go to in Harlem . . . out-of-the-way primitive churches, side-street speakeasies and they fall for it. About twice a year I manage to sell a story. It is acclaimed. I am a genius in the making. Thank God for this Negro Literary Renaissance! Long may it flourish!"

In these words a minor character in Wallace Thurman's "Infants of the Spring" expresses in terms of cynical self-interest what has for some time been only too apparent to some of those interested in the artistic expression of the Negro. Elsewhere in the book its hero is shown in the midst of a black and white gin party. "'This," he kept repeating to himself, 'is the Negro Renaissance and this is about all the whole damn thing is going to amount to. . . . It is going to be necessary, he thought, to have another emancipation to deliver the emancipated Negro from a new kind of slavery.'"

Yet it is only seven years ago that some of us who today find an echo of these savage words in our hearts hailed with high hopes the beautiful and colorful volume "The New Negro," edited by Alain Locke, and accepted its premise of a younger Negro generation on the threshold of a new era of accomplishment. They were no longer bound together, Locke wrote confidently, "by a common problem, but by a common consciousness" and "shedding the

chrysalis of the Negro problem they were achieving something of a spiritual emancipation."

It was inevitable that this prophecy could only be partially fulfilled. From that consciousness of which Locke wrote, and probably far more from individual impulse, unregimented by any such herd instinct, has come in the intervening years some real achievement. And much more might have come if the so-called Negro Renaissance had not been ballyhooed and exploited commercially and socially, until it has been, to a large extent, degraded into a racket. It was always too much to hope that 12,000,000 Americans of any race or color could, in our chaotic civilization, achieve a solidarity of thought and experience which would result in genuine expression. The finest products of the Renaissance have been distinctly individual as, for instance, the extraordinary work of Jean Toomer. But Toomer has published little, if anything, since "Cane" appeared in 1923. Meanwhile the mystical and probably mythical concept of a common Negro consciousness has for some time been superseded by a very definite consciousness, common alike to white and black writers of a very definite and marketable fashion in literature and art for all things Negroid. Among Negroes this has resulted, among other things, in the kinds of writing which are the objects of Wallace Thurman's attack.

"Infants of the Spring," like Thurman's earlier "The Blacker the Berry," is in a sense a pioneering book. It is the first serious and aggressive attempt that I know of by a Negro writer to debunk the Negro Renaissance in a thoroughgoing manner. It is bitter, disillusioned and probably unfair in its wholesale rejection of nearly everything being done by Negro artists and writers. But in spite of this and in spite of its somewhat crude and journalistic writing, there is an exhiliration to be gained from its angry honesty. It will no doubt be glibly denounced as "unconstructive," and indeed, it makes no pretense of being anything else. For it is simply the hearty individual expression of an individual disgust with life in general and with the Negro Renaissance in particular by a writer too keenly sincere and individualistic to find an easy escape from its sterility by such frequently suggested and ready-made panaceas as flight into communism, back to a problematical "African Inheritance" or into the ranks of the bourgeois Negro writers who "have nothing to say, and who write only because they are literate and feel they should apprise white humanity of the better classes among Negro humanity."

It is especially by their type of novel and by the uncritical acclamation with which examples of it have been received, I think, that the Negro Renaissance has been debased. One can almost establish a standard novel that will combine the worst features of all of them. Almost inevitably it will have a foreword by some professional foreworder like Carl Van Vechten or maybe Zona Gale, stating among other things how novel and unique it is. If it is in the Carl Van Vechten tradition it will probably have a glossary of Harlemese and certainly it will include a scene in which a Harlem ball or soirée is invaded by uplifting or merely curious palefaces, who are promptly knocked out by the ease, beauty and sophistication of the rainbow-tinted members of the gathering. It is also practically obligatory for at least one member of the white group to make the very natural faux pas of mistaking some Negro light enough to "pass" for a Nordic, and to behave with a complete and pitiable lack of savoir faire when he discovers his mistake. To find this wearisome is not for a moment to deny that such incidents occur frequently in real life; a very great number of light Colored People must have experienced white uncouthness of this kind, but writing suffers as much from a stencil based on such incidents as it does from stencils of the Uncle Tom and Mammy variety to which these same writers very properly object. The real argument of these Negro novels could be summed up in almost every case as follows:

"I am writing this book because most white people still believe that all Colored People are cooks called Mandy or Pullman porters called George — but they aren't. They think we all live in cotton-field cabins or in city slums, but actually some of us live on Edgecombe Avenue or Chestnut Street. We don't all shout at Camp Meetings or even all belong to the Baptist or Methodist Church. *Some of us are Episcopalians.* If you were privileged to visit our homes (which you aren't, for we are just as exclusive as you are) you would find bathtubs, sets of the best authors and *etchings* on the walls! That's how refined we are. We have class distinctions, too. Our physicians' wives snub our hairdressers and our hairdressers our cooks, and so on down the line. The daughters of our upper classes are beautiful and virtuous and look like illustrations in *Vogue.* They are also far more attractive than white girls of the same class, for they come in assorted shades of bronze, tan, fawn, beige, hazel, chestnut, amber, cream, gold, lemon, orange, honey, ivory and persimmon. You would, of course, be attracted to the heroine of this book, but as you are white, you are, in nine cases out

of ten, a cad with dishonorable intentions. We'll allow the tenth case out of pure magnanimity. But in any case the heroine would scorn you because in the last chapter she will marry the dark hero and be happy ever after. She might, being human, have been tempted perhaps for a moment by the wealth and power you represent and by the immunity from insult and discrimination which 'passing' would mean for her, but even if she weren't too noble and loyal to yield to such temptation in the end the call of race would be too strong for her. Joy isn't on your side of the line, nor song, nor laughter, etc., etc." We have heard all this many times before, and we are likely to hear it many times again.

Nearly all these novels have been wholly devoid of literary merit, but they have a certain documentary value in revealing what is on the minds of a large portion of the Negro Intelligentsia, as well as of many Negroes who do not technically belong to it. Among recently published novels Jessie Fauset's "The Chinaberry Tree" is an outstanding example of this type. This, her third novel, like its predecessors is dedicated to the proposition that there are Colored ladies and gentlemen and that these constitute Colored Society. As propaganda this is no sillier than the stale counter-propaganda to which it is a retort, but the fact remains that a rather serious waste of Negro intelligence and sensitiveness is still going into the writing of such books. What is obvious from them is that the long frustrated, ambitious, struggling Negroes of the upper and middle classes still accept and jealously cherish the values of capitalistic civilization. They accept these values very much as they move into white neighborhoods as white people abandon them. And in this acceptance there has been much more than the snobbery and silliness which books like Miss Fauset's make pathetically and ludicrously evident. It represents two generations of struggle and achievement away from slavery toward a promised land, a goal which as they near it has all the unsubstantiality of a mirage. One may even concede that the struggle was noble and the achievement praiseworthy, and still feel that new day of the Negro Renaissance, if it comes, will not be made by those unable to detach their emotions from this mirage. Morever, everything that can be said in favor of this goal was said once and for all, far better and more movingly than it has ever been said since in Du Bois's eloquent "Souls of Black Folk." And even the "Souls of Black Folk," somehow, dates a little today. It is, for all its beauty, a little Victorian, moralistic, and slightly rhetorical; but it is moving as its successors

are not because it is passionate and militant, where they are merely complacent, because its author was in those days the leader of a forlorn hope, rather than a Negro Babbitt.

Negro Babbitry exists and there is no reason why it should not be depicted; so do Intellectual Negro groups and Negro Smart Sets, but the Negro novels written about them have very generally been novels of neurosis. Instead of novels of Negro life they have been *prospectuses*, designed to sell to white readers the idea of Negro Upper Classes. But if there have been few if any good novels written about the Negro Bourgeoisie there have been at least three first rate novels about Negro Proletarian life. All three were written by Negro poets. Negro poets have very generally been spare-time poets — and proletarians. They have been cooks, dishwashers, floor-scrubbers, shoe-shiners, waiters, stevedores, Pullman porters, stokers, or have worked at any of the various forms of rough and casual menial labor open to American Negroes.

Langston Hughes is one of these poets, who having spent much of his life in the world of labor has inevitably been close to the life of the masses of his race. It was out of this experience that he wrote "Not Without Laughter," which is not only uniquely moving and lovely among Negro novels but among books written about America. It is affirmative in a sense in which no other book by an American Negro is, for it is the story of a Negro happily identified with his own group, who because of this identification tells what is essentially, despite the handicaps of poverty and prejudice, the story of a happy childhood. The poverty was never sordid; for one thing it was country poverty in a growing small town of the Middle West, and the child had a backyard to play in, in which there was an apple tree, and flowers as well as clothes lines.

"Here the air was warm with sunlight and hundreds of purple and white morning glories laughed on the back fence. Earth and sky were fresh and clean after the heavy night rain and . . . there was the mingled scent of wet earth and golden pollen on the breeze that blew carelessly through the clear air." It was poverty, but never sodden or defeated though the child's grandmother toiled all day at her washtub washing the white folk's clothes and his mother sweated all day in the white woman's kitchen, while his handsome, vagabond father went fishing and played the guitar; even though eventually there was no place in Stanton for his pretty, fun-loving Aunt Harriet but the sinful house in the "bottoms" where on "summer evenings little yellow and brown and black

girls in pink and blue bungalow aprons laughed invitingly in doorways and dice rattled with the staccato gaiety of jazz music on long tables in rear rooms; pimps played pool; bootleggers lounged in big, red cars; children ran in the streets until midnight with no voice of parental authority forcing them to an early sleep; young blacks fought like cocks and enjoyed it; white boys walked through the streets winking at Colored girls; men came in autos; old women ate pigs' feet and watermelon and drank beer; whiskey flowed; gin was like water; soft indolent laughter didn't care about anything, and deep nigger-throated voices that had long ago stopped rebelling against the ways of this world rose in song." It was poverty enlivened by singing and laughter, by strong, if casual, family affection and occasional family quarrels; by carnivals and camp meetings, by lodge meetings and regalia after the day's work was done, for: "Evening's the only time we niggers have to ourselves — Thank God for night — 'cause all day you give to the white folks." Simple and touching, yet by some miracle always avoiding sentimentality, the story is told with a happy tenderness which recalls Katherine Mansfield's dictum that in fiction the beginning of art is *remembering*. It has the courage of its tenderness for Negro things, a serene and robust acceptance of the common things, the sights and smells and sounds, the folkways and idiosyncrasies of the people who made up one little Colored boy's background; and through this acceptance and evocation of them it communicates the very feeling and texture of life.

The only other American novel I know which seems to me comparable with "Not Without Laughter" is Willa Cather's "My Antonia." Both books have, in common, somewhat the same quality of radiant sanity. Both communicate, in spite of relatively small canvases, a feeling of earth and sun and air, of a strong life with deep folk roots. In both a poetic quality is due in part to the fact that the story is told reminiscently through the eyes of a child reflecting a child's curiosity and sensibility and wonder, and that the child in each case was a potential poet. In both there is ugliness and hardship and pain, but in both these incidents are dominated by a triumphant vitality, an open-eyed resilience in the face of life. And this, too, is a quality that is characteristic of Langston Hughes and which sings through his poems whether he is writing of Beale Street Love or Railroad Blues or of

> The steam in hotel kitchens
> And the smoke in hotel lobbies

And the slime in hotel spittoons
Part of my life

and is implicit in his high-hearted chant, "I, Too":

I, too, sing America
I am the darker brother
They send me
To eat in the kitchen
When company comes
But I laugh
And eat well
And grow strong.

Tomorrow
I'll sit at the table
When company comes
Nobody'll dare
Say to me
"Eat in the kitchen"
Then.

Besides
They'll see how beautiful I am
And be ashamed.

I, too, am America.

Claude Mackay is another vagabond poet who has brought a somewhat similar experience to rich fruition in his novels "Home to Harlem" and "Banjo." Mackay, too, has worked in the white man's kitchens, and on wharves and trains and the stokeholes of steamers. He has known the life of a down-and-out beachcomber on the waterfront of Marseilles, and that of a poor farm boy in Jamaica. Older and more mature than Hughes, more complex and possibly deeper he seems to have reached by a more difficult path an adjustment which in Hughes is instinctive. While his early associations seem to have had somewhat the same happy quality as Hughes' childhood and a far more beautiful setting — what hardships there were were due to poverty rather than to color — if one may judge by his writings he seems to have experienced the full cruelties of race and class struggle after his arrival in America in 1912. He was the first of the Negro intellectuals to be a radical in the political and economic sense as well as a militant rebel on behalf

of his race. His novels "Home to Harlem" and "Banjo" are full of a deep and bitter wisdom, but also full of humor and zest for life. "Home to Harlem" specializes in those aspects of Harlem life that are not mentioned in polite Harlem society, at least if white people are present: Promiscuous and happy love making, drinking, jazzing, shooting and razor flashing; the life of the high yellow "sweet-back" and of the black women who work for him; instinctive, rhythmic life — frequently joyous, but with undertones of cruelty and savagery.

These aspects are presented convincingly through the consciousness of two very different types of Negro — Jake, a simple, uneducated, American working man who delights in most of them, and Ray, the exiled sensitive Haitian student. Ray finds in Harlem the extremes of joy and despair and finally flees from it because he was entangled with a girl and feared that some day "the urge of the flesh and the mind's hankering after the pattern of respectable comfort might chase his high dreams out of him and deflate him to the contented animal that was a Harlem Nigger strutting his stuff. 'No happy-nigger strut for me' he would mutter when the feeling for Agatha worked like a fever in his flesh. . . . And he hated Agatha and, for escape, wrapped himself darkly in self-love."

Jake returning to Harlem from overseas could find joy on Seventh Avenue where "the lovely trees were a vivid green flame and . . . the smooth bare throats of brown girls were tokens as charming as the first pussy willows." He could find it at the Congo, the amusement place, entirely for the unwashed of the black belt. You could go to the Congo and turn rioting loose in all the tenacious odors of service and the warm indigenous smells of Harlem, fooping or jig jagging the night away. You would if you were a black kid hunting for joy in New York. But "Ray felt more and his range was wider and he could not be satisfied with the easy simple things that sufficed for Jake. Sometimes he felt like a tree with roots in the soil and sap flowing out and the whispering leaves drinking in the air. But he drank in more of life than he could distill into active animal living. Maybe that was why he felt he had to write.

"He was a reservoir of that intense emotional energy so peculiar to his race. Life touched him emotionally in a thousand vivid ways. Maybe his own being was something of a touchstone of the general emotions of his race. Any upset — a terror-breathing, Negro-baiting headline in a metropolitan newspaper or the news of a human bonfire in Dixie could make him miserable and despairingly despondent

like an injured child. While any flash of beauty or wonder might lift him happier than a god. It was the simple, lovely touch of life that stirred him most. . . . The warm, rich brown face of a Harlem girl seeking romance . . . a late, wet night on Lenox Avenue when all forms are soft shadowy and the street gleams softly like a still, dim stream under the misted yellow lights. He remembered once the melancholy-comic notes of a 'Blues' rising out of a Harlem basement before dawn. He was going to catch an early train and all that trip he was sweetly, deliciously happy, humming the refrain and imagining what the interior of the little dark den he heard it in was like. 'Blues' . . . melancholy-comic. That was the key to himself and his race. That strange, child-like capacity for wistfulness and laughter. . . .

"Going away from Harlem . . . Harlem! How terribly Ray could hate it sometimes. Its brutality, gang rowdyism, promiscuous thickness. Its hot desires. But, oh, the rich blood-red color of it! The warm accent of its composite voice, the fruitiness of its laughter, the trailing rhythm of its blues and the improvised surprise of its jazz. He had known happiness, too, in Harlem, joy that glowed gloriously upon him like the high noon sunlight of his tropic island home."

"Banjo" is a bitter and devastating picture of the white man's civilization as it looks to the black man at the bottom of it, and of the free and instinctive life which the irresponsible and uneducated black man can still manage to live in an ever tightening, mechanical white civilization. "For civilization had gone out among these native, earthy people, had despoiled them of their primitive soil, had uprooted, enchained, transported and transformed them to labor under its laws, and yet lacked the spirit to tolerate them within its walls."

That this primitive child, this kinky-headed, big-laughing black boy of the world did not go down and disappear under the serried rush of the trampling white feet; that he managed to remain on the scene, not worldly wise, not "getting there," yet not machine-made, nor poor-in-spirit like the regimented creatures of civilization was baffling to civilized understanding. Before the grim, pale rider-down of souls he went his careless way with a primitive hoofing and a grin. From these black boys he could learn to live. . . . how to exist as a black boy in a white world and rid his conscience of the used up hussy of white morality. He could not scrap his intellectual life and be entirely like them. He did not want or feel any urge to

"go back" that way. . . . Ray wanted to hold on to his intellectual acquirements without losing his instinctive gifts. "But also he knew that though it was easy enough for Banjo who in all things acted instinctively it was not easy for a Negro with an intellect standing watch over his instincts to take his way through the white man's world . . . but of one thing he was resolved: civilization should not take the love of color, joy, beauty, vitality and nobility out of *his* life and make him like the mass of its poor pale creatures. . . . Could he not see what Anglo-Saxon standards were doing to some of the world's most interesting people? Some Jews ashamed of being Jews. Changing their names and their religion . . . for the Jesus of the Christians! Educated Negroes ashamed of their race's intuitive love of color, wrapping themselves up in respectable gray, ashamed of Congo sounding laughter, ashamed of their complexions . . . ashamed of their strong appetites. No being ashamed for Ray! Rather than lose his soul, let intellect go to Hell and live instinct."

Writing of this kind is, of course, very exasperating to the Negro Intelligentsia. Some of them may protest with justice that they are being *themselves* in conforming to the standards of the white civilization in which they live, since it seems to them good except in so far as it discriminates against them; that they are not merely Negroes but Americans as well, dark Americans, to be sure, but still fulfilling themselves legitimately through the usual American channels. This clash of views is not limited to Colored Americans. Every racial minority in America, with the possible exception of the Irish, is divided between those of its members who wish to sink themselves, their blood and their differences in the majority, and the proudly or defensively race conscious who wish to take their stand on this blood and this difference. Among Colored People, particularly, the logic of facts may actually be with the first group. Owing to the extravagance of anti-Negro prejudice any person, however white, is classed as Colored if he is known to possess a single drop of Colored blood. A "Negro" thus arbitrarily created is not necessarily being himself any more when he sings spirituals or jazzes, than when he follows what are usually accepted as white behavior patterns. If Negro art has struck deeper roots, as I think it has, in the soil of the race conscious attitude it is because it has been the more affirmative and liberating. Conformity to white standards, on the other hand, has very generally meant conformity to the most standardized elements in our civilization — its nega-

tions, its drabness, its gentility. But this is not, I think, inherently or eternally true and even today the best writing is by Negroes in whom this consciousness is transcended. Thus "Not Without Laughter" is not merely a chronicle of Negro family life. The story of hard working, stay-at-home Annjee's helpless love for her vagabond husband, of Harriet's rebellion against her mother's puritanism, the true and sensitive picture of Sandy's boyhood and adolescence are rich and warm and full-flavored because of certain Negro qualities that Langston Hughes knows and loves, but the book's hold on our emotions is independent of these. They merely enhance the truth of what the perceptive artist in Hughes has felt about love between a man and a woman, about the clash of the generations, and the awakening consciousness of a boy. "Home to Harlem" has given us the most poignant and unforgettable picture of the substratum on which our commercial civilization is built in the half-dozen pages which describe Ray, the Negro student waiter, tossing in a half-waking nightmare in the vermin-infested bunkhouse of the Pennsylvania Railroad. Here Color is an added element of torture and humiliation in the life of the underdog. It makes escape from this life difficult if not impossible, but it is only part of the picture into which Mackay has distilled the very essence of the horror and despair the cruelty at the roots of our civilization must awaken sometimes in any sensitive mind. Color again is an element, but only one element in the entrancingly comic feud between the Negro cook and the Negro waiters on the dining car which ended with the cook's discomfiture and demotion. Color again plays an important part in the sweeping epic of "Banjo," but "Banjo" is an immensely rich book because it is far more than a story of Color. It is a story of beachcombing and vagabondage, of the clash not only between black and white, of civilization and primitive races, but of civilization at grips with itself, and of the detached and frequently humorous clarity, with which the beachcomber, black or white, who keeps clear of it except for the occasional necessity of working or panhandling sees it for the thing it is.

"A good story," Ray says at one point, "in spite of those who tell it and those who hear it is like good ore that you might find in any soil — Europe, Asia, Africa, America. The world wants the ore and gets it by a thousand men, scrambling and fighting, dying and digging for it. The world gets its story in the same way."

MARTHA GRUENING

THE DUBLIN MAGAZINE

A Quarterly Review of Literature, Science and Art

Edited by SEUMAS O'SULLIVAN

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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

The letter to Sullivan by JAMES JOYCE first appeared in *The New Statesman and Nation* (London) with the introductory note as here reprinted, February 27, 1932.

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AN AUTOPSY AND A PRESCRIPTION

THERE are questions one would like to ask. Has the English or American novel established for itself a tradition? Has that tradition any power to afford us advice about the novels of the present day which urge their claims to our attention? If one substitutes poetry for fiction both of these questions receive an affirmative answer; and yet one sees the limitations of tradition — perhaps one might better say the ease with which tradition can be ignored — in the curious inability of most contemporary critics to apprehend the eccentric poetry of today in any terms except its own. This is also the case with the novels of today, although there is less blame to be attached to the critic. For the novel has become conscious of itself — the critic has become conscious of the novel in terms other than those of pastime — probably only since James. Although James left a mass of critical writing which must serve as one of the foundation stones for that future "Prolegomena to All Criticism of the Novel" — the novel's *Poetics* — nevertheless his work remains unassimi-

lated and even largely unknown. James's own taste was so fine that he was content with only one explicit generalization: a novel should be *interesting;* but there are many general laws implicit in his *interesting* that need to be elucidated for our duller and more partial tastes. There have been efforts since James to provide the critic with a skeletal structure or simply a springboard; one thinks immediately of the works by Mr. Percy Lubbock, Mr. E. M. Forster, Mr. Edwin Muir. These efforts have been chiefly in the direction of technique, towards establishing criteria of form; Mr. Lubbock had the most concentrated and narrow conception of form and was, therefore, the most helpful. This is all to the good; M. Valéry's skepticism as to the possibility of a novel's being a work of art needs to be corrected. But such efforts have a limited territory to work in. The novel is always going to be the chosen vehicle of those writers who have only a rudimentary feeling for form and such a writer may have something to say. Lawrence is an instance, and Mr. Forster can only shout "Prophet!" when he considers him. It is exactly that "something to say" that needs attention; content, subject-matter, their possible extent, their proper treatment need clarification and analysis. This essay is an attempt to arrive at some tentative conclusions regarding the non-formal aspect of the novel by means of the examination of the work of four modern writers. Tentative conclusions only, for our lack of standards wherewith to judge novels is related, finally, to our present moral disorder, and the unhappy reader has too frequently justification for suspecting the critic of possessing prejudices instead of principles, of concealing a particularly unattractive ethical nigger in his woodpile. I trust that such is not the case here, yet it is only fair at least to utter this *caveat lector.*

More specifically, I wish to consider the work of Messrs. Ernest Hemingway, John Dos Passos, and F. Scott Fitzgerald and to indicate my reasons for finding it repulsive, sterile, and

dead. Also I wish by examining the work of their contemporary, the late Raymond Radiguet, to suggest qualities the cultivation of which would render American fiction more interesting than it is now. I do not propose to invoke the tradition at the existence of which I hinted because I doubt whether the writers whom I regard as foremost in that tradition, Melville, Hawthorne, James (to whom one might add Cooper and Mark Twain) would receive general acceptance, and, furthermore, because such heavy artillery is not needed: their own contemporaries are enough to condemn the three novelists I have selected.

My reasons for selecting Hemingway, Dos Passos, and Fitzgerald are, I think, justifiable. In a loose phrase, they suit the spirit of America today, and, more definitely, they are having more influence on young writers than any other men are having. I am aware that there are other novelists now writing in America, and perhaps better ones. But these three are all more serious than Cabell or Hergesheimer, more serious even than Miss Cather or Thornton Wilder. Mr. William Faulkner's Gothick romances are having a vogue, but this belated disciple of Poe needs to refine his style and technique before he can approach the level of Mr. Dashiell Hammett. Mr. Thomas Wolfe's first novel received some praise, but it was a ridiculous attempt to conflate a *Brothers Karamazov* with a *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man.* Then there are Mr. Westcott and Miss Roberts. Mr. Dreiser has dug his own grave; I shall have occasion to animadvert to Mr. Lewis. That the subjects of my essay are linked together is somewhat arbitrary; it would be silly to entitle them "a school"; but they have all learned something from Lewis and Dreiser; their ultimate master, although the discipleship is at times so degenerate as almost to be an apostasy, is Flaubert. The ideal of an objective presentation has been set before them; they think and feel in ways so like those of Flaubert that all their men are Homais or Charles or Frédéric

Moreau, all their women are Emma. The prevalence of the Flaubertian ideal in a troubled period like our own is not fortuitous, it is a rock to cling to. To observe accurately, to eschew any thesis or "philosophy" is at least to play safe; devotion to an aesthetic creed seems to offer promise of a kind of salvation.

I

Benjamin Crémieux in his interesting book, *Inquiétude et Reconstruction*, says: "During periods of trouble the artist has only three things which may vouch for him: his sincerity, his virtuosity, his spiritual richness or his imagination." I have no desire to insist upon the "only," but it is a good text and worthy of application. Our conclusions will be that virtuosity and sincerity may be granted to our three novelists, with important reservations to be made later, and that bankruptcy is a mild metaphor to describe their imagination. Compliments ought to be paid to these writers for their talents. Mr. Fitzgerald's three novels have established three literary fashions: the college novel, the jazz age, and the racketeer or "big shot," who is almost part of American folklore; he has had many imitators. He deserves more serious imitation: in his last novel, *The Great Gatsby*, the economy of plot produces a maximum of upheaval with a minimum of means in such a way as to gain our complete admiration for his technical skill. Mr. Dos Passos has certainly that fullness of documentation which James praised in Wells and Bennett; *Manhattan Transfer* is a very exact equivalent of Times Square. Mr. Hemingway has a good ear for ordinary conversation; he can be brief and still say all that he has to say; in *The Sun Also Rises* the veracity of his mirror gains our assent in its reflection of a typical group. In a superficial examination, sincerity would not seem to be denied them: they have no theses to prove; they believe what they say; they are in earnest. But obviously it is a naïve unquestioning sincerity,

not that of which Proust or Gide are capable. We shall grant them these two qualities for the time; we shall find that the defects of their imagination have some of their roots in the defects of their sincerity and virtuosity.

To be "an observer of human nature, without fear, without sentiment, without prejudice, without personality" was certainly Flaubert's aim in his realist novels and in large measure his accomplishment. It was an aim that required an austere discipline; Flaubert had a fine artistic conscience and great patience. His self-discipline was most frequently exercised in his style and verbal matters; as James saw, he was blind to the finer issues of life. It is this blindness which is repeated in his followers and is their undoing. They have accepted his ideals without accepting the terrific discipline that in Flaubert guaranteed his artistic integrity. They have rejected even the disciplines current in their own day: they have not, like Joyce, studied the common and universal so intently that every thought and deed of Bloom is true; they have not, like Proust, been casuists of the imagination; they have not, like Mrs. Woolf, so nicely chosen their impressions, and ordered the rhythm of those impressions so well that any subtlety is possible and yet is real. They have been content with the respectable ideals of objectivity and accuracy. They suffer then when compared with Joyce, Proust, or Mrs. Woolf, even with Gide or Lawrence. Not possessing the tact or conscience of Flaubert they fall away here, too. Guilty of the sins of sloth and acedia they have chosen not to create, but to report. Hence Fitzgerald has reproduced the glitter of the twenties, the camera eye of Dos Passos has accumulated detail after detail as if from lack of anything else to do, Hemingway produces brute fact after brute fact, bombardments, drunken parties, bullfights, fishing trips, accouchements, with equal ease and equal emotional intensity. If we were convinced of the sincerity of these authors, the sincerity that comes from the artist's recognition of his responsibility

to the reader not to waste the reader's attention upon insignificant matters, we might blame ourselves for our ennui. But it is very easy and very just to equate their sincerity with simple laziness. It is laziness which is responsible for the sheer bulk of *The Beautiful and Damned*, which leaves Dos Passos' lawyers, politicians, public relations counsels simple clichés of "radical" jargon, which confines Hemingway's attention to primitive rudimentary beings. Hemingway's sincerity and appeal exist only for the tabloid mind. His formula is the demonstration of an experience intrinsically commonplace in an exotic setting; it is the formula of the movie palace.

Here is the first flaw in the ideal of objective presentation. In the hands of anyone except the superlative artist, such as Flaubert in *Madame Bovary* or Joyce in *Dubliners*, followed without artistic conscience or tact, it is boring. What is worse is that the novelist, recognizing no responsibility beyond that of the newspaper reporter, is led straight to aesthetic failure. Hemingway's two novels, *The Sun Also Rises* and *A Farewell to Arms*, offer confirmation of this belief. The first thing that a reader notices about them is the use of the autobiographic point of view. Of course I do not mean that Mr. Hemingway is the hero of his own novels. Rather I offer the simpler question concerning the results of stories told by an "I." It is a method well adapted to the telling of detective stories where the aim is that the reader be partly mystified; it is a dangerous method elsewhere. I can conceive of two good uses that can be made of this convention: first, when the I is omniscient and hardly or not at all an actor; second, in the novels of straight adventure, such as *Treasure Island*, where the sole purpose is to record events or at the most the results of events upon a single character. Hemingway is not writing novels of these types and he has rather stupidly handicapped himself and the reader. For one's knowledge of the characters in *The Sun Also Rises* the reader is at the mercy

of Jake. He warns one of his prejudices; one can discover a few for oneself; but it is tedious to be constantly checking up on his report. In *A Farewell to Arms* the result is more serious. You have a lovely heroine seen only through the eyes of a lover. Hence Catherine remains flat, without a breath of life. Her creator uses two stops only: the partner of frequent copulations, and the "brave little woman." This fault in technique is made doubly vicious by the choice of narrators: the impotent Jake with the consequent abnormality of his relation to the heroine, and the red Indian Henry. As a result of this autobiographic method, these novels lack what James would call "a rounded objectivity, the precious effect of perspective, indispensable to beauty and authenticity." The narrator is too much on top of one; it is impossible to be a true spectator; Mr. Hemingway is not playing fair. James could have warned him of another aesthetic defect resulting from his favorite method: "The first person, in the long piece, is a form foredoomed to looseness." This looseness is shown, particularly in the earlier novel, by the way that dialogue tends to take the place of structure. Things are not done; things are said. Instead of thickening the gravy of character with nicely adjusted action in the way that James elucidates in his prefaces, Hemingway dilutes it with conversation. Incident takes the place of event. The characters are frequently self-revealing in their speech, but action that would dramatize such self-revelation rarely follows. As action fails (it is not accidental that the least dramatic motive of all, that of escape, is dominant in these two novels) so there is a failing in that structure or plot which can come only from action, and which gives a fundamental organization providing depth for the persons in the fable. These characters do not live when they are off the scene; they are nervous instead of being passionate. This may be truth as Mr. Hemingway sees it; it is certainly the limits of reporting, and the result is a novel given in terms of sensation, not emotion. Even if we

could forgive these defects which ruin his novels as works of art, in order to justify his report as correct, we must realize that his sincerity is limited by the defects of his vision. By his arbitrary choice of abnormal characters he has contracted his problem so that he will be able to meet it. James's criticism of De Maupassant is applicable: "The world represented is too special, too little inevitable, too much to take or leave as we like — a world in which every man is a cad and every woman a harlot."

These defects of the imagination, this spiritual poverty, reveal themselves in something that is even more fundamental, the artist's attitude towards life and the resultant tone of his work. I have in mind the completely bourgeois quality of the novels by these three writers, their contentment with life as seen by their neighbors, their rejection both of any detachment or any enthusiasm that would turn their eyes from the mechanical and habitual routine of people making money and children in devious and shady ways. They could learn, if it were necessary for their contemporaries to tell them, from Lawrence or Mrs. Woolf, that the bourgeois spirit can be rejected or transcended and that something of exaltation or glory may enter in its place. Curiously it is Mr. Dos Passos, who has elsewhere expressed considerable protest against the economics of this age, who reveals himself as the most nearly akin to those Philistines, Dreiser and Lewis, and whose work is too frequently a clumsy repetition of what Mr. Lewis, at least, has a brighter way of saying. In Dos Passos' ant-like accumulation of detail and forlorn literalness there is a suggestion that he has come to be like the loathed object he looks upon. There is not discernible in his two later novels, *Manhattan Transfer* and *The 42nd Parallel*, any quality of imagination or divination other than the humdrum workings of the ordinary bourgeois mind. His style has the same lack of color, emphasis, or variety that his characters have. The mere observation of the

bourgeois world has produced the Philistine novel, comprehensible by the bourgeois, and dead for the rest of us. Mr. Lewis has a point of satire which is one notch above the satirized; Mr. Dos Passos has not in his works even indignation; there is not even the hoarse-voiced eloquence of the communist orator which might imply at least a glimpse of something other than a sordid world. And yet one suspects that the communist is only a perverted bourgeois, equally a slave to materialism. To quote Drieu La Rochelle: "The captains of industry who rule democracies more or less directly by means of corporation lawyers, experts, and journalists, the communist dictators surrounded by bourgeois technicians, both have the same mind, be their flags white or red. They are satisfied with the same pseudo-scientific instruction swept up in thousands of popular books. They participate in the same material order; they are submissive in deed and spirit to the same famous economic laws. They think only of trafficking in the same commodity, work, whether in the form of capital in the markets and directors' meetings or in the form of communist or militarist chain-gangs in the factory or barracks. . . . Does Lenin in the Kremlin think of anything else than that which occupies the attention of Stinnes or Schwab, the greatest output? . . . In the midst of the moral and intellectual ruin of our epoch only the machine stands erect, only its jaws, which devour everything else, are firm. And the capitalist is as much its slave as the worker. . . . It is time to found a new church, to return to philosophy, to the exercise of knowledge, to the cult of wisdom." "The cult of wisdom" is a phrase that Dos Passos would not understand. His weary narratives betray a clumsiness of perception and a preoccupation with the ordinary that may be honest but are certainly inadequate reporting. His characters are like casual acquaintances; that is his success, in greater measure it is his real downfall. If he is trying to be an "observer of human nature, without fear, without senti-

ment, without prejudice, without personality" he indicates that such an ideal is really self-defeating. To observe completely the novelist must have fear, sentiment, personality — if not prejudice — in order intuitively to apprehend characters who have all these things and artistically to create for us a form embodying and articulating these characters.

This lack of a sense for the finer issues of life which James found in Flaubert is repeated in his followers in their lack of wisdom beyond the most ordinary worldly variety and their ignorance of the subtler reaches of the human spirit outside the realms of love-and-money-making in mean streets. Fitzgerald would accept his subservience to the bourgeois world with less protest than Dos Passos. Irony might be his defense, but the result is the same: atony of the spirit. Fitzgerald has described it in two passages in *The Beautiful and Damned* where he is speaking almost *in propria persona:* "It is in the twenties that the actual momentum of life begins to slacken, and it is a simple soul indeed to whom as many things are significant and meaningful at thirty as at ten years before. . . . The unmistakable stigma of humanity touches all those impersonal and beautiful things that only youth ever grasps in their impersonal glory. . . . After the sureties of youth there sets in a period of intense and intolerable complexity. With the soda-jerker this period is so short as to be almost negligible. Men higher in the scale hold out longer in the attempt to preserve the ultimate niceties of relationship, to retain 'impractical' ideas of integrity. But by the late twenties the business has grown too intricate, and what has hitherto been imminent and confusing has become gradually remote and dim. Routine comes down like twilight on a harsh landscape, softening it until it is tolerable." This is loose and clumsy writing, trying to explain, perhaps justify, the artist's creatures; its application to the artist himself is easy. This atony, this stodginess is spread over these three novelists; by its resultant aphasia it crushes out the flickering

lyricism that Mr. Hemingway's characters might justify on their fishing trips; the unvarying monotony of Mr. Dos Passos' work without real detail or emphasis is reënforced by his ignorance of rhythm, an ignorance that is part of his general nervelessness. There is one exception to my general accusation: Fitzgerald has a flair for the fantastic that displays itself in his fairy stories and occasionally in his serious novels. One could instance the mad parties that Gatsby gave. Related to this and better is his feeling for the fantastic and glamorous absurdities in American life. On the level of low comedy this is shown in the list of names of the guests at Gatsby's; on a more interesting level Gatsby himself deserves to be as much as Babbitt a symbol of the romantic, hopeful American child-man, incompetent and defeated by realities he cannot understand. Fitzgerald is undoubtedly the best of these three; he alone can practise real economy: the second chapter of *The Great Gatsby* is worth the whole of a Dos Passos novel in its exposition of the dreariness of American life. He alone possesses humor and he is the only one to attempt irony. But this is not enough as we see when we ask the questions which Mr. Stephen Hudson puts to novelists in general: "To what extent has this, that or the other novelist confirmed or added to my understanding of life? Which of them has opened my eyes to something I had not seen, which has enriched me with a hope, sustained me with a faith or finally destroyed an illusion which was obscuring my vision? Which of them by the revelation of his own uniqueness has provided me with some moral or intellectual nourishment?" By such standards all three are found wanting.

2

It is an unkind irony to demand of these novelists either richness of spirit or imagination. And yet they cannot be wholly faithful to the ideal of objectivity; in the work of each of them there will be found, offered perhaps as a substi-

tute for imagination, a private mark of personal feeling. Instead of emotion, conviction, vision, formal artistry, anything in which the reader can join and share, we are given idiosyncratic sentiment. The sentiment is rancid; the author is sentimental about his material. In Fitzgerald this is exhibited by a division in his sensibility. He has caught the glitter of the new American world; not possessing the mechanical, chromium-plated elegance of Morand, he has a flair for taxicabs, burnt-out gin parties, the Ritz and the Plaza, which is *chic*. As far as it is simply fashion, the new pleases more than the old; Gatsby is more to our taste than Soames Forsyte. But the old hangs on; a large lump of Swinburne has gone sour in Fitzgerald's soul: "All night the saxophones wailed the hopeless comment of the 'Beale Street Blues' while a hundred pairs of golden and silver slippers shuffled the shining dust. At the gray tea hour there were always rooms that throbbed incessantly with this low, sweet fever, while fresh faces drifted here and there like rose petals blown by the sad horns around the floor." This is a typical passage; it is stale and evocative of sentimentality. Fitzgerald can refer to "the old sad poignant days of the war" and be simply cheap. At his best he can communicate the feeling of wandering between two worlds *à la* Barnabooth; at his worst, like his contemporary, the *Rhapsody in Blue*, his occasional "poetic" interlude drags its formless way, coughing down its sobs, demanding, by its garish display of quickly shopworn novelties, an attention and response that it can obtain when we have deliberately lowered ourselves to its bathetic level.

Mr. Hemingway has a variety of tricks with which to beguile the reader's sympathy. He has been credited with "pathos without sentimentality." As far as pathos is concerned it is obvious that he is very successful in respect to a very literal meaning of the word. In the hospital scene at the close of *Farewell to Arms* he has stooped to the inartistic purpose of making the reader feel as if he were actually watching

the delivery of a child. His procedure is that of trivial war plays which secure their effects by shooting off guns instead of creating real feeling by means of lines and action. One's misgivings about "pathos without sentimentality" begin when one contemplates the sweet hard-boiledness of these books and their characters. It is safe to assume that the hard-boiled attitude always conceals a store of easy sentiment. Jake is honest; he says, "It is awfully easy to be hard-boiled about everything in the daytime, but at night it is another thing." There is for instance the scene in the cathedral at Pamplona where he prays for the bullfighters and everybody and that the bullfights would be good and that he would make a lot of money. Pathos has been found in this scene; it has been described as "touching." But that pathos can exist only for the docile reader who is willing to concede a stock response to characters who are, by hypothesis, debarred from any justification for standard emotions. These characters live too much at random to demonstrate any norm in their own lives. Such people exist; their lives may be worth recording, but nothing that they do surprises us or excites real emotion. Yet Mr. Hemingway strives to secure a sympathy that is not justified by his facts; this discrepancy will some day provoke ridicule. It is a form of his sentimentality, his desire to obtain emotion without earning it, which is usually concealed by his habit of saying as little as possible. It is revealed most flagrantly when his characters strike attitudes, philosophize, and indulge in the mock-heroics of measuring themselves against eternity. Then come a primitive stoicism, which is the garment for a combination of aphasia and anesthesia, a pother about futility, an emotion which has never before in the history of literature been regarded as interesting, let alone tragic, and the business about "a lost generation." These motives are the result of a transient fashion, and they will soon lose their spurious charm.

Mr. Dos Passos is duller but more honest. His admirers

have tried to fasten virtues upon him. Mr. Sinclair Lewis in a review of *Manhattan Transfer* contributed the phrase "skein of many-colored threads," which is another way of saying "a badly constructed novel." He has also attributed to Dos Passos a feeling for life as an "obscene magnificent glory." One hopes that Mr. Dos Passos would reject the phrase; the word "glory" needs to be revived, as Herbert Read has indicated; it does not need to be debased. A more valid apology for Dos Passos is that rejecting the usual categories of individual and character he is trying to create the novel of a group or community, even of humanity at large. Such an attempt, even though it be a legitimate effort to extend our aesthetic consciousness, is probably doomed to failure. "Rugged American individualism" may be a ridiculous phrase in some contexts; it represents too vital a part of our traditional culture to permit our acceptance of a novel which is really in a foreign language. Such an apology for Dos Passos affiliates him to the *unanimiste* group. Comparison of his work with *Mort de Quelqu'un* would indicate failure: he has compromised, his characters neither exist in themselves, nor have they the symbolic and anonymous reality that M. Jules Romains' artistry can secure. However, I regard Dos Passos as closer in spirit to Zola. Although his page after page of automatic writing shows a greater boredom than the works of the other two American novelists and although he is equally unable so to choose and order his material as to convince us of its significance, he has not tried to redeem his determination not to create (an aboulia which characterizes his personages) by the false glamour and promises of refined sentiment that Fitzgerald and Hemingway offer. Yet Dos Passos is a victim of the same defects of sincerity and virtuosity which are more patently displayed in the efforts of the others to conceal their nakedness with the rags of an adolescent sensibility. They have been credited with sincerity because they pandered to a fashion set by the

spiritually debilitated of the post-war period. They reported human activities which an older generation had preferred not to see; hence "sincerity." They were ignorant of things which Hawthorne and James before them had known, but their audience was equally ignorant. We can see also their lack of real virtuosity. The analytic genius of Proust led him finally to the *theoria* which is manifest in *Le Temps Retrouvé*. Mrs. Woolf's impressionistic genius has so increased her range and sensitiveness that *The Waves* has a more perfectly rounded objectivity than *The Voyage Out*. Joyce's documentation and his talent, even if it is misapplied, for symbolist poetry have combined to produce a world, or an Inferno, which we know to be real and to which we can give the whole strength of our imaginative response. In these authors real virtuosity has compelled its possessor to overcome the superficial and personal. But our three have merely tricks of the trade. Their imaginations are banal; their sensibility is sick.

3

Although the virtues of Raymond Radiguet have been trumpeted, both before and after his death, by such diverse gentlemen as Paul Morand, Henri Massis and Jean Cocteau, neither his novels nor his poetry have secured in America the attention they deserve. My purpose then is double; to write an appreciation of his works of fiction which may help to secure for them the wider audience they merit and to indicate a special point of interest, his possession of certain qualities of mind and ways of thinking which are valuable for a good novelist and which Messrs. Hemingway, Dos Passos, and Fitzgerald lack.

Radiguet's first novel, *Le Diable au Corps*, is the story of an adulterous passion. The hero and heroine are young, the hero too young to take part in the war in which the heroine's husband is fighting. Both the age of the protagonists and the milieu in which their history is exposed are abnormal. Radi-

guet warns us of that fact, devoting a slow series of chapters to the establishment of the feverish lassitude that qualified the life of those for whom the war was only distant alarms. But his triumph is that out of singular conditions there emanates the conviction that the truth of these hearts is universal, that in spite of the forced maturity of the hero, the absence of the husband, and the peculiarities of the daily life — even with a wholly different set of accidental *données* — the hero's heart and soul would have changed and developed as it did, and that the misery and unhappiness that met this pair was necessary and inevitable. This furtive and impossible quasi-Arcadian romance, actuated by the hero's egotism and by the stupid errors of two sets of parents, pursues a normal course which convinces us of the reality of the fable. The progression in the hero's attitude towards the husband from a grotesque chivalry to a waspish hate, the growth of his egotism from a simple desire to play the "man" to an arrogance that turns in a cruelly selfish fashion against his partner; these are developments of character that bear the mark of authenticity. The drama is not a tragedy; there is no attempt to persuade us that the hero is *chrestos;* rather it is a complete and subtle illustration of the hero's statement, "Mon amour sophistiquait tout." That concept alone shows us that we are in a more recognizably human world than that of *A Farewell to Arms*. The death of the heroine is perhaps not justifiable as an event, any more than is Catherine's in Hemingway's novel; it is much more satisfactory as a symbol and aesthetically truer than Hemingway's effort to extract extra tears.

His second novel, *Le Bal du Comte d'Orgel*, is a comedy of masks and concealment, joined with a comedy (a *comédie larmoyante*, one might say) of restraint. The formula is again adultery, but an adulterous love which is barely recognized, and is renounced before consummation. The author's interest is not centered in the evil results of disordered passion, but in

its effect upon the sincerity of his actors. This question of sincerity is so dominant as to render the minor characters types of sincerity or insincerity. One of the minor agents, Paul Robin, a young diplomat, who serves as a foil for the hero, is so neatly presented in a passage of exquisite subtlety, that quotation is justifiable:

"Those who do not perceive the deeper qualities, who let themselves be fooled by the surface of things are like timid bathers afraid of venturing beyond their depth. Paul thought he had achieved a character for himself; in reality he had merely surrendered to the vices which were invading him little by little. However, he found it more convenient to have people believe that he was acting through policy than to confess that it was merely through weakness. Prudent almost to cowardice, he frequented many different circles; he considered it wise to have a foothold everywhere. When following such tactics, one is always in danger of losing one's balance. . . . 'Not to be duped' was the disease of Paul Robin. It is the disease of the century. It can sometimes bring one to the point of duping others. Every organ grows or is atrophied because of its activity or inactivity. By dint of distrusting his heart, he had lost most of it. He thought that he was hardening himself, inuring himself to life, whereas in reality he was being self-destroyed. Mistaking completely the goal to be obtained, he enjoyed this slow suicide more than anything else in his character. He believed that it was a means to a better life. But so far people have found only one method of keeping the heart from beating, and that is death."

Set off against this perfect *poseur* are the naïve honesty of the hero and the more perfect sincerity, that comes of breeding and suffering, in the character of Prince Naroumof, the Russian émigré who serves almost as a tragic chorus to the piece. The reader's chief interest is in the heroine. Simple and good, the strange attraction that she feels for the hero causes her, in her turn, to assume a mask, but her honesty forces

her, unable to play a rôle, to unmask; in the process she has discovered her husband's mask. The situation in its comic implications remotely resembles *The Doll's House*, but Radiguet escapes the necesssity of the mock-tragic conclusion that is forced upon Ibsen by Nora's essential triviality. The Countess d'Orgel might have been insipid except that, as Radiguet says, "less manoeuvres inconscientes d'une âme pure sont encore plus singulières que les combinaisons du vice." The comedy which encloses this book indicates a finer tact than Fitzgerald has when in *The Great Gatsby* he demands a greater emotional load than his characters will bear.

The milieu of *Le Bal* is the milieu of Proust, but the difference between the two uses made of the Faubourg St. Germain is significant. Proust loved his background for its own sake; his genius as a novelist included the talents of a scene-painter and a ballet-master. One is afraid that it requires only a change in fashion to outmode much of *le côté de Guermantes* just as Cooper's virgin forests are outmoded. Of course there is much in Proust's background that is vital, and it is the significant social setting which Radiguet has used as a frame, religious and social conventions which tell us a great deal about his characters before they act, which immediately give his characters depth and perspective, and which impart to their actions meanings and connotations which thicken the texture of the novel. It is this feeling for characters in the round who are natural and human because they are part of a recognizable social organism, which we feel to be lacking in our American novelists. We appreciate their difficulty: American society is more disordered and flowing than in older countries; James complained that we have no Ascot, no Epsom. Still institutions and conventions do exist here, and their use would imply more and interest us more than the use of the caravan society of *The Sun Also Rises*, which leaves us too much at the mercy of the idiosyncratic conventions of an individual author.

With the appreciation of the value of a social establishment, in integrating and realizing the novel for the reader, goes a feeling for the continuity of human experience. This feeling works in two ways. Most deeply, it endows the writer with an attention to history, an awareness of tradition, and a regard for the future. More immediately to our purpose, it gives the characters in his works a guarantee of their being in time, as the use of social conventions guarantees their being in space. In other words, in a good novel, characters do not come from nowhere, and they depart from the book upon a projection of possible future existence. It is this illusion which is saved by Radiguet and which is lost by our American authors. The latter, particularly Messrs. Hemingway and Fitzgerald, never convince us that their puppets existed before the story began; the fabulous career of Jay Gatsby as it is finally revealed merely evades the issue. And Frederick Henry dies as surely as Catherine does. "Finis" is written as clearly as it ever was by the tag of once popular novels, "and they lived happily ever after." Our imaginations are not invited to coöperate in creating this illusion of reality, just as they have not been so invited while the actors were on the stage.

Our imaginations have not been invited because our authors have not used their own in the attribution of emotions, passions, motives, or actions to their agents. Radiguet made a good statement about his method in writing *Le Bal:* "The only imaginative effort will be applied not to exterior events, but to the analysis of emotions." It is here that we place our final condemnation of Mr. Dos Passos. His admirers might urge for him that no American author is more attentive to securing the realities of place and time, that his careful documentation takes his characters from birth and leaves them obviously still unfinished and that his concern with fundamentals of life, such as earning a living and marrying, and his acute consciousness of the existence of class in America give him lines of social reference which convincingly place his

characters. Certainly Mr. Dos Passos' intentions are serious. And it would be a hard saying that the analysis of emotions is the sole manner of delighting us. But it would certainly be one way of engaging our sympathy with his characters, a sympathy which is fundamental to our assent to a novel's virtue and to the assent of the generations after us. Such a method involves departure from the ideal of Flaubert. The conviction, however, is forced upon us that Flaubert, great artist as he was, has been of more harm than benefit to the novel since his time. Such an analysis of emotions, as practised by Radiguet, or Proust, or Mrs. Woolf, frees the author from the ennui of mere reporting, and confers life upon his fiction. It frees him from an unreflecting adherence to his merely personal intuitions and enables him to relate them to his reader's consciousness. It does not hinder his true personality or obliterate his own trademark; rather it removes him from the subjection to the ordinary bourgeois vision of life which we have seen displayed in these American writers.

A final word, which returns to our first considerations. One does not demand of a novelist, any more than of a poet, that he shall possess "culture" in the narrow, literary, bookish sense that the word has had since Arnold. One does demand of him, even more than of a poet, that he shall be aware of the totality of life. Even more than of a poet, one can say, for whereas one can ungrudgingly make concessions to the egocentric lyricist who performs his spiritual acrobatics for our recreation, the lyrical novelist will usually be a poet *manqué* and, what is worse, a bore. The idiosyncratic soul may amuse for a couple of sonnets; if it be stretched out over three hundred pages it will sustain the attention of only those afflicted with the debased and popular taste for the quaint; if the performance be repeated we are justified in passing by. The novel, by reason of a closer adherence to human life than is required by any other literary form is provided with fewer formal conventions, and this comparative anarchy affords

the practitioner a slighter repertory of tricks, stylistic or formal, with which to decorate or to startle.

Culture, then, the culture which Thackeray and James had, and which Dickens and Zola did not, is what we demand of the novelist. And by culture we cannot mean a "philosophy." Most philosophies which are consciously embodied in fiction are poor things, be they the pessimistic determinism of Hardy with its unerring appeal to the adolescent, or the genteel Christianity of Thornton Wilder. If M. Fernandez' analysis of Meredith be a true one it is perhaps all the better for the novelist if his *Weltanschauung* be rarely manipulated into conceptual form. That will be the critic's task. But the culture that we desire will include a feeling of tradition, embodying good taste — a quality not for an instant discernible in the American novelists we have been criticizing. Such a culture and tradition is most immediately apprehensible in its national form. One feels behind Radiguet, Mme. de Lafayette, Benjamin Constant, Proust, even Racine. In this country we have Cooper, Hawthorne, Melville, James, Mark Twain. But this past is not used.

LAWRENCE LEIGHTON

IN THE 'SCONSET BUS

UPON the fallen
cheek

a gauzy down —
And on

the nape
— indecently

a mat
of yellow hair

stuck with
celluloid

pins
not quite

matching it
— that's

two shades
darker

at the roots —
Hanging

from the ears
the hooks

piercing the
flesh —

gold and semi-
precious

stones —
And in her

lap the dog
(Youth)

resting
his head on

the ample
shoulder his

bright
mouth agape

pants restlessly
backward

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

FROM A BANNED WRITER TO A BANNED SINGER

In this remarkable document, Mr. James Joyce gives his impressions of his friend, Mr. Sullivan of the Paris Opera, in several of his leading rôles. Many competent critics regard Mr. Sullivan as the most extraordinary dramatic tenor that Europe has listened to for the last half century. Mr. Joyce complains that Mr. Sullivan is "banned" or at least unknown in England. The reflections written here were sent in a letter to Mr. Sullivan by Mr. Joyce after an occasion on which the singer was carried shoulder high by his Marseilles admirers after an astonishing performance in "Guillaume Tell." One knows of no other similar documents, no letters in a tone of intense admiration and sardonic banter sent by, say, Manzoni to Rubini, or by Flaubert to Gilbert Duprez, or by Ibsen to the Swedish Nightingale. Lovers of grand opera will recognize the operatic situations and phrases with which the text is studded and detect under the mask of their Christian names the three divi who figure in the final quartette. The document which the singer has kindly placed at our disposal is published with Mr. Joyce's permission.

HE STRIDES, booted with anger, along the spurs of Monte Rossini, accompanied solely by Fidelion, his mastiff's voice. They quarrel consonantly about the vocality of the wind, calling each and its other clamant names.

* * * * *

Just out of kerryosity howlike is a Sullivan? It has the fortefaccia of a Markus Brutas, the wingthud of a spread-

eagle, the body uniformed of a metropoliceman with the brass feet of a collared grand. It cresces up in Aquilone but diminuends austrowards. It was last seen and heard of by some macgilliccuddies above a lonely valley of their reeks, duskening the greylight as it flew, its cry echechohoing among the anfractuosities: *pour la dernière fois!* The black-bulled ones, stampeding, drew in their horns, all appailed and much upset, which explaints the guttermilk on their overcoats.

* * * * *

A pugilant gang theirs, per Bantry! Don Philip, Jay Hell, Big O'Barry of the Bornstorms, Arthur, siruraganist who loosed that chor. Damnen. And tramp, tramp, tramp. And T. Deum sullivamus.

Faust of all, of curse, damnation. But given Parigot's Trocadéro for his drawingroom with Ballaclavier in charge at the pianone the voice becomes suburban, sweethearted and subdued. The heat today was really too much of a hot thing and even Impressario is glad to walk his garden in the cool of the evening, fanning his furnaceface with his swelter-tails. *Merci, doux crépuscule!*

* * * * *

Who is this that advances in maresblood caftan, like Hiesous in Finisterre, his eyeholes phyllistained, his jew-bones of a crossbacked? A little child shall lead him. Why, it's Strongman Simpson, Timothy Nathan, now of Simpson's on the Grill! Say, Tim Nat, bald winepresser, hast not one air left? But yeth he hath. Regard! Auscult! He upbraces for supremacy to the potence of Mosthigh and calls upon his baiters and their templum: You daggones, be flat!

* * * * *

What was in that long long note he just delivered? For the laib of me I cannot tell. More twopenny tosh and luxus languor about I singabob you? No such thing, O son of an

envelope. Dr to J. S. Just a pennyplain loafletter from Braun and Brotmann and it will take no rebutter. You may bark Mrs Liebfraumich as long as you love but you must not burk the baker. Pay us disday our daily bread. And oblige.

* * * * *

On his native heath. Speech! Speech! cry the godlets. We are in land of Dan. But their words of Muskerry are harsh after that song of Othello. *Orateur ne peut, charlatan ne daigne, Sullivan est.*

* * * * *

11.59 p.m. *Durch diese hohle Gasse muss er kommen.* Guillaume's shot telled, sure enough. But will that labour member for Melckthal be able to bring off his coo for the odd and twentieth supererogatory time? *Wartemal!* That stagesquall has passed over like water off a Helvetian's back. And there they are, yoelling yokels, none the worse for their ducking and *gewittermassen* as free as you fancy to quit their homeseek *heimat* and leave the ritzprinz of their chyberschwitzerhoofs all over both worlds, cisalpic and transatlantine. And how confederate of gay old Gioacchino to have composed this finale so that Kamerad Wagner might be saved the annoyance of finding flauts for his *Feuerzauber! Pass auf!* Only four bars more! He draws the breathbow: that arrownote's coming. Aim well, Arnold, and mind puur blind Jemmy in the stalls! But, great Scott, whas is thas for a larm! Half a ton of brass in the band, ten thousand throats from Thalwyl: Libertay. libertay lauded over the land. (Tay!) And pap goes the Calville!

* * * * *

Saving is believing but can thus be? Is this our model vicar of Saint Wartburgh's, the reverend Mr Townhouser, Mus. Bac., discovered flagrant in a *montagne de passe?* She is obvious and is on her threelegged sofa in a half yard of casheselks, Madame de la Pierreuse. How duetonically she hands him his

harp that once, bitting him, whom caught is willing: do blease to, fickar! She's as only roman as any *puttana madonna* but the trouble is that the reverend T is reformed. She, *simplicissima*, wants her little present from the reverend since she was wirk worklike never so nice with him. But he harps along about Salve Regina Terrace and Liza, mine Liza, and sweet Marie. Till she cries: bilk! And he calls: blak! O.u.t. spells out!

* * * * *

Since we are bound for a change of supper, was that really in faith the reverend Townhouser for he seemed so verdamnably like? *Ecco trovato!* Father Lucullus Ballytheacker, the parish priest of Tarbert. He was a songful soul at the keyboard and could achieve his Château Kirwan with cigar thuriferant, without ministrance from platform or pulpit, chase or church. Nor used he to deny his Mary neither. *Nullo modo.* Up to maughty London came a muftimummed P.P. Censored.

* * * * *

Have you got your knife handy? asks the bellman Saint Andy. Here he is and brandnew, answers Bartholomew. Get ready, get ready, scream the bells of Our Lady. And make sure they're quite killed, adds the gentle Clotilde. Your attention, sirs, please, bawls big Brother Supplice. *Pour la foi! Pour la foi!* booms the great Auxerrois.

* * * * *

Grand spectacular exposition of gorge cutting, mortarfiring and general martyrification, bigleighted up with erst classed instrumental music. *Pardie!* There's more sang in that Sceine than mayer's beer at the Guildhall. Is he a beleaper in Irisk luck? Can he swhipstake his valentine off to Dublin and weave her a frock of true blue poplin to be neat for the time Hugenut Cromwell comes over, gentlest lovejesus as ever slit weasand? Their cause is well sainted and they are

centain to won. Still I'll pointe half my crown on Raoul de Nangis, doublet mauve and cuffs of buff. Attagirl! *Ah ah ah ah ah ah viens!* Piffpaff, but he's done it, the bully mastiff again. And woops with him through the window tallyhoed by those friers pecheurs who are self-barked. Dominie's canes. Can you beat that, you papish yelpers? To howl with the pups!

* * * * *

Enrico, Giacomo and Giovanni, three dulcetest of our songsters, in liontamers overcoats, holy communion ties and cliqueclaquehats, are met them at a gaslamp. It is kaputt and throws no light at all on the trio's tussle-tusculums. Rico is for carousel and Giaco for luring volupy but Nino, the sweetly dulcetest, tuningfork among tenors, for the best of all; after hunger and sex comes dear old *somnium*, brought on by prayer. Their lays, blent of feastings, June roses and ether, link languidly in the unlit air. Arrives a type in readymade, dicky and bowler hat, manufactured by Common Sense and Co. Ltd., carrying a bag of tools. Preludingly he conspews a portugaese into the gutter, recitativing: now then, gents, by your leave! And, to his job. Who is this hardworking guy? No one but Geoge, Geoge who shifts the garbage can, Geoge who stokes in the engine room, Geoge who has something to say to the gas (*tes gueules!*) and mills the wheel go right go round and makes the world grow lighter. *Lux!* The aforesung Henry. James and John stand mouthshut. Wot did I say? Hats off, *primi assoluti!* Send him canorious, long to lung over us, high topseasoarious! Guard safe our Geoge!

JAMES JOYCE

THE BRINK OF DARKNESS

LATE in October the first snow had come, large heavy flakes with shaggy edges, far apart, moving down in vast circles from a soft sky. The trees of the orchard outside the window of the dining room were hard and cold and shone like smooth rock against the dead earth and the colorless air. And the great rough flakes moved cautiously among them, here and there, as if exploring the terrain. There was a slight flurry, and the flakes gathered faster; then followed flurry upon flurry, a few moments apart, a steady, slow pulsation, and with each the air was whiter and darker; till at last, the flurries coming imperceptibly closer and closer together, the air was an unbroken sheet of snow through which one could hardly move, the flakes were small and light, and darkness, amid the confusion, had superseded twilight.

During the winter months the snow had lain deep over the rounded hills, and I had gone out on skis with my two Airedales. The clouds were grey and soft and even, and seemed to have no lower edges, so that the sky as such had no identity —there was merely the soft air. The snow merged into the air

from below with no visible dividing line. Often I should not have known whether I was going uphill or down had it not been for the pull of gravity and the visible inclination of the skis. Often I came to the top of a rise and started down with no warning save the change in speed, or arrived at the bottom of a hill with no warning save the sudden slowing. I could travel for miles and see only one or two houses. Sometimes a mouse appeared, floundering as if in heavy air, and the great dogs would lunge clumsily after it, snap it up, and drop it dead, leaving a small spot of blood suspended in greyness; but the few rabbits were better equipped and evaded them. Once I passed a small pen made of chicken wire, behind a barn, in which there were fifteen or eighteen yearling coyotes. The farmers often captured the cubs when they were plowing in the spring, and kept them into the next winter in order to slaughter them for fur. These were about ready for killing. They swung in a group to the fence as I passed, lifting the foreparts of their bodies swiftly and gently, to drop them precisely facing, their shoulders flat, the front legs straight and close together, the wide sharp ears erect, the narrow little noses examining the air detail by detail. It was strange that they never broke through so slight a fence, yet there they were; young dogs would have walked through it with scarcely a pause, scarcely the sense of an obstacle. But these creatures were innocent and delicate, spirits impeded by a spell, puffs of smoke precise at the tips. As I passed, they turned their heads, watching me, then moved away and apart, to lie down in the snow or crawl under their small shelter. They had been the only sign of life amid four hours of snow, and they had made no sound; they had focussed upon me for a moment their changing, shadowy curiosity, and had then been dissipated as if by the quiet of the hills.

It was on such a day, upon my coming down the slope with the dogs and entering the hot kitchen, that I had seen Mrs.

Stone for the last time in her life; I had stopped by the door of her room to speak to her as she lay in her bed; a few hours later she had lost consciousness; and she died in the night.

I remembered the preceding fall. The three of us, myself and the Stones, had been puzzled no end by the luminosity of the stubble at night. On the slope south of the house, even on moonless nights, it had a curious glow, a kind of phosphorescence, that appeared to light the air for a few inches above the ground and then to stop suddenly. When the moon was full, the glow for several feet above the fields was so dense that the eye could scarcely penetrate to the ground. At a definite level above the field the glow stopped suddenly, and one could look for miles through watery moonlight over hills that seemed smothered in soft fire. The dogs, running through the fire, below the height of visibility, were dark vortices, blurred and shapeless, stirring rapidly in the motionless flame. Above the roof of the house in the cold still nights of late autumn, Orion, the Pleiades, and all the bright powder of the northern heaven moved steadily from east to west; and the Great Dipper, low to the north, with few stars near it, its large stars plain and heavy, moved with an equal and compensatory pace from west to east and slipped in behind one of the hills.

In spite of the bright autumn and the shadowy winter, the village had been an unbearable blaze of heat in June. The winter wheat, which had germinated and grown eight or ten inches high under the snow, had shot up prodigiously in the spring warmth. The round hills were green in all directions, for even the spring crop was well along. The tall elms were in leaf; the apricot orchard about the house was heavy and dark; each tree was a black void growing shadowy and visible at the edges. The summer beat on the ground with no motion; the two white goats across the road lay panting in the shade, trembling watery blotches, barely discernible.

Once the Stones went up into the mountains for the after-

noon, taking me with them. The mountains were only ten miles back of the village, and on the way we stopped at a farm owned by Mr. Stone and leased out to a Seventh Day Adventist family. The Stones wanted to arrange for the girl of the family to come and help with the housework. She came to the gate with a shovel and a bucket as we drove up, a tall, coarse-boned person, somewhere between twenty-five and thirty-five, with sharply drooping and very long shoulders, and a small face, snub-nosed and almost featureless, her mouth open. She looked like one who had been intensely preoccupied, and who had discovered us suddenly. She was sweaty and had dust on her clothes and was visibly panting. She promised to come.

The desperate violence of the seasons in this northern wheat-country may have begun my bewilderment. I felt like the Adventist girl; it required a perpetual effort of concentration to live and act, and any interruption brought one up painfully as from a tenacious dream.

During January and the first week in February, the weather was extremely cold. The kitchen range was red hot, and so was the stove in the dining room, but the corners of the rooms were never warm enough, and in the halls you could always see your breath. I kept my stove on the second floor as hot as I dared, and I usually sat up till one and two in the morning to prevent the fire's dying down, for no bed clothes were adequate; one night the mercury dropped to sixty below. During this cold spell Mrs. Stone took to her bed, become suddenly very weak. She had always been frail; it appeared now that out of humility and consideration for others she had been concealing her weakness till she had arrived at the point where concealment was impossible. Her strength ebbed very rapidly, and as the cold began to grow less savage, she suddenly died.

The undertakers were not allowed to remove her body from the house, for she had not wished it; they came and

went. The nurse, a tall, grey-haired woman, asked me to bed the dogs in the barn for a few nights, for the body was to be placed in the hall at the foot of the stairs. The casket was wheeled in when the undertakers had gone, a soft grey affair, with some sort of lacy material supported above it and dropping away on either side in the form of a tent. From within came the heavy odor of hothouse flowers; as the casket moved, the slight stiff shifting of the body was just visible through the curtain.

Asa Stone, who lived on a neighboring farm, took his father away for the night. The old man, in spite of his bulk, seemed shrunken; his face, pale and lifeless, fell away in heavy lines, and he seldom looked up. Asa led him by the arm to prevent his stumbling.

A neighbor woman came in to sit up with the nurse and myself. The three of us went into the hall and drew back the curtain from the casket. She was dressed in white, her head surrounded by lilies of the valley, her hair, in spite of her sixty years, pure black against the flowers. As we moved the casket a little, there was again the slight stiff shifting of the body. The face was very firm; the jaw was strong, almost too strong for a woman, had it not seemed a strength employed to achieve gentleness. The mouth, wide in proportion to the jaw, suggested her slight smile, but it was not smiling. It was finished; it seemed to have come to an ultimate balance, to have found itself. We dropped the curtain and returned to the dining room.

Toward morning I went upstairs to lie down for a few hours, as I had to teach during the day. I came down about seven, passed the casket in the first grey of the dawn, moved through the motionless cold which seemed to be gathering heavier about it and which was somehow identified with the thin sweet odor, perhaps the odor of death, perhaps of the flowers, of which the casket itself, with its frosty tent might have been the visible core.

At noon I returned. As I opened the door into the darkened hall, the casket awaited me, the sweet odor deepening on the still air. I was a trifle sickened; it affected me like the smell of ether. I had lunch and returned to my teaching. The casket awaited me in the darkness at five o'clock. In the dining room, the two women were talking and sometimes laughing, as they got supper ready. I went up to my room and lay down, but could not sleep. I was beginning to shudder a little as I passed the casket, yet it was not from fear of the dead. The ghost, if she stood there waiting by her remains, fixing in memory the house in which she had lived for so many years, and which she must now leave forever, was too patient, too gentle, to be feared. The thought of her inexpressible solitude filled me with pity. Consciousness was perhaps nothing but change; permanence might transcend it — but how? The stiff dark lines could just be discerned through the lace whenever I passed. Exhausted, I drowsed.

The shrill voice of the nurse was calling me to supper; I pulled myself together, smoothed my hair, and went down. We were all too tired to eat much, but after the dishes were cleared, we sat about the stove and talked. The neighbor woman was a Canadian who had married an American; she kept a small Canadian flag on her dresser, while her husband had an American flag on his. She was quiet, but positive; she had been married before and had grandchildren. As her solid and somewhat shapeless figure sat there, rising out of the amorphous pile of her clothing, one realized that the Canadian Government was based upon a rock, that her flag rested before her mirror on solid principles and not on sufferance. She had lived in southern Idaho and in Utah, a country inhabited largely by Mormons and Basques. Concerning the Basques, she was noncommittal; they were a class apart, of whose doings she knew little and cared less. Concerning the Mormons, she was bitter: a nondescript, ragged, thieving lot, she found them, given to vagrancy and to fornication,

living from hand to mouth, and letting their children starve.

The nurse was a widow with a single child, a daughter of high-school age, and she feared the influence of the college on the high-school children. So far her daughter had always confided in her, had told her exactly of her goings and comings; but life was precarious. Only the week before there had been a scandal involving a dozen or more high-school girls. A clothing merchant had kept several rooms of assignation in his basement, and the story had finally got out. He himself had been involved with at least one of the girls, but fortunately for himself a half dozen or so other prominent men had been equally compromised, and the affair was being smothered as effectually as possible.

I was too tired to talk. Toward morning again I left them, to get a little sleep before the day's work. At the top of the stairs, the only reality of which I was conscious was the winter night, with the timeless gentle presence, the fine sweet odor, in the hall below.

On the morning after the third night the family began to gather for the funeral. Alvin, the younger son, and his wife, were the first to come, their features blurred with sorrow and with tears. Alvin resembled his father, and appeared in a daze; the blow had not been as sharp to him as to his father, had not entirely awakened him. His wife, tall, with her clear German features and her immature blue eyes, shared his confusion without knowing why. Asa and Clara came with Mr. Stone between them; the children would be brought over later. Clara took charge of the house, and Asa of his father. Asa's features were those of his mother, but somehow smaller, harder, and with none of her serenity. He was a man who was seldom still for long, who seemed to know little of peace, whether of body or of spirit.

Asa and Clara moved the casket into the parlor and took away the veil. Soon the florist arrived, and I helped him bank

the flowers about the coffin. In the kitchen there were coffee and a light breakfast for those who needed them. I went out for a cup of coffee; as I entered the kitchen, the Adventist girl from the country came in, her great awkward shoulders drooping and swinging as she moved, her eyes red. Her brother came behind her. He had been deformed from birth. He was over six feet tall, a man of great power and agility, but he had been born without forearms; where his elbows should have been, there were thick, red, wrinkled wrists, and on each wrist there were two long red fingers without nails. His nose was long and coarse, and his voice was nasal. To make up for the shortness of his arms, he had developed violent but agile motions of the upper body; doing even the simplest things, he seemed to be the victim of some unhappy and uncontrollable agitation. He was a teamster by trade, when he had time from his farm, and often worked for Asa. His abnormality had made him an exile from human society, and as a result he had acquired an unusual sympathy for horses and mules, with whom he could accomplish extraordinary things, and that part of his nature which was not satisfied by this companionship had turned to religion. When driving a team, he sang in a loud nasal drone, almost devoid of variation, hymns that he intended merely to quiet his own spirit, but which, on a still day, could be heard among the hills for a mile or more. He sat at the kitchen table now, as I drank my coffee, his large bony trunk darting suddenly this way and that, his wrinkled fingers squirming about a piece of bread or a knife, his sharp mouth dropping pious ejaculations between swallows. "Eli can sure talk religion," Asa had once said of him with admiration.

At the church I sat with the family, in a private room to the side of the pulpit. After the sermon I looked once more into the casket. The black hair seemed not to have stirred. The face was not heavily wrinkled, but there were a few small

wrinkles about the mouth and eyes. The skin was preternaturally and evenly white, and in the wrinkles there seemed a trace as of an underlying darkness, even and impenetrable. At the grave, a mile and a half outside of town, the ceremonies were brief, for a vile sleet had set in. The coffin was lowered; the last prayer was read; and the grave was filled with stones and mud. As we drove away, I looked back to see a huge mound of hothouse flowers, dark heavy green, and clear hard white and yellow, lying as if murdered in the colorless air, beneath driving sleet.

That afternoon Alvin and Asa began moving the furniture from the lower part of the house; two days later they had finished. I was to keep my rooms in the upper part till the house should be sold, since there were only three months left until the summer vacation. The old man would stay with Alvin. That was late in February. A few days later another heavy freeze set in.

I made no attempt to keep the lower part of the house warm, although I had to use it to some extent. It was absolutely bare. Even the curtains and window-blinds were gone, and when I went down to the kitchen at night for a glass of water, or crossed the parlor and the kitchen to reach the basement for coal, I moved through a naked glare of electric light, with wide bare windows on two sides of me, my feet echoing, my hands stiff with the cold. I came to see myself moving in this room, as if from the outside, and I sometimes wondered who I was. When I came home at dusk from teaching and entered the lower hall, I thought I could still feel the earthy cloud at its center; sometimes my flesh went chill. I came gradually to carry more and more coal upstairs every morning; soon I was getting enough to last me through the night. Upstairs were the dogs and the stove; below was the echoing desolation.

The dogs, large and unkempt, a mother and her son, were old enough to enjoy spending most of their time on my bed in

the cold weather. When I came up the stairs, they would be waiting, their heads on their paws, their faces expressing an identical gentle question. I had kept their bed in another room at first, but the cold had forced me to close the room up, and I was glad enough to have the two sleep with me. The field mice from round about were invading the empty building in greater and greater numbers. They were too quick for the dogs at close quarters, especially on the second floor, where there was still a good deal of furniture; the mice lost all fear, and the dogs no longer disturbed them, but would lie still for half an hour on end, watching the scratching, shadowy little creatures with indifferent curiosity or remote amusement. During the first week in March, the cold spell still enduring, the dogs did not come one morning when I called them as I was about to leave the house. Nor did they come the next day nor the next. I knew well enough what had happened, and would not have been greatly troubled had it not been for the weather and for a few porcupines in a small wood lot several miles away. Every afternoon I walked over the hills, trying to get sight of them on the snow; a light snow had fallen after their going, and their tracks had been covered; I did not know how long it might take them to find their way in from among the hills. Here and there a farmer had seen them; they had been living for several days on the offal of a slaughtered calf and had been sleeping in haystacks. Several farmers had tried to catch them for me, but the dogs were powerful, and, when in trouble, as suspicious and nearly as dangerous as wolves. They seemed to be moving in a wide circle, which I gradually mapped, but on which I never intercepted them. If I didn't meet them, at least it was only a matter of time till they would pick up my trail and follow me in. The hills were a cold thin blue, darker where the wind had riffled the snow and the earth showed through, their edges definite with a cold hair-line precision. There were no clouds, and as I returned home at dusk, a few small white

stars appearing, the sky stood above me unvaulted, a steely grey, without distance or dimension.

While the dogs were gone, I spent as much of my nights as I could in reading, and when I could no longer read, I took to watching the mice. At first they had seemed to me uncanny; gradually I came to be fond of them. I put out food for them, and sometimes a dish of milk. With their food they were likely to be boisterous, snatching it and running off, or throwing it about in play if they were not hungry; with their drink they were delicate and gentle, advancing to the rim of the saucer like far-away gazelles, the natives of this dissolving wilderness, their feet as sensitive as ants, their round eyes rolling quickly this way and that. One night after I had been watching the mice without moving for nearly an hour, I got up suddenly and went downstairs for a glass of water. The sound of my feet rang out with tremendous volume as I descended the stair; as I crossed the glare of the front room, the echo seemed to resound from the room above, as if I were walking up there. I stood still to quiet the noise. I was alone and erect, a few feet from the broad window, bright emptiness behind me. The light from the window fell on the snow outside; it had been warm enough at noon for a slight glaze to form; the shape of the light on the glaze was sharp-edged and clear. Only, at the upper left-hand corner of the window there was darkness, a tangle of withered vines outside. I stared at the smooth surface of the snow thus suddenly revealed to me, like a new meaning not divisible into any terms I knew. Again I had the illusion of seeing myself in the empty room, in the same light, frozen to my last footprints, cold and unmeaning. A slight motion caught my eye, and I glanced up at the darkened corner of the window, to be fixed with horror. There, standing on the air outside the window, translucent, a few lines merely, and scarcely visible, was a face, my face, the eyes fixed upon my own. I moved on quickly to the kitchen; the reflection started and vanished.

The next morning, upon reaching my office, I heard of the catastrophe of the night before. One of my students, the son of one of my colleagues, a boy who was to have graduated this spring but who had been confined to the pest house with meningitis, had, in the night, while no nurse was present, been seized with delirium, had leapt from his bed and escaped from the door of the hospital in his night clothes. He had run the four blocks separating the hospital and his home, had broken a window and climbed in. An hour later, at midnight, his parents had returned, to find him sitting before a smouldering fireplace in an icy house, moaning to be taken to his room. He had never regained consciousness; before morning he was dead.

There was another funeral in the Presbyterian Church. This time the coffin was kept closed, from respect for the disease. The coffin was banked high behind and on either end with yellow chrysanthemums. The boy's fraternity came in a body, twenty and some boys, seated in two front rows at one side, looking curiously young and helpless before the coffin. The waxen petals of the chrysanthemums glowed in the dusk of the church; they seemed almost to move, curling and uncurling ever so little. There was something innocent and pathetic about the flowers, these earthy blossoms, cut clean from the ground from which they had struggled, foaming dimly, still dimly alive in the gloom, struggling imperceptibly, curling imperceptibly inward, as if they were the sluggish dead incarnate, dying slowly again in pity, returning numbly to the earth.

At the end of four days, toward nightfall, the bitch returned, emaciated and limping, her head and throat, inside and out, completely covered with quills, her mouth forced open with the mass of them, her tongue hanging out, swollen, and white with quills as far back as I could see. I was prepared for this kind of return; I held her and poured vinegar over the entire wounded area to soften the quills; she screamed, but

lay still. Had it been the other dog I would have sent for help and for morphine; I knew that morphine would only make the bitch stupidly savage without calming her, even in doses so large as to be dangerous. I sat astride her body, letting my entire weight fall on her ribs to hold her down. She tossed this way and that, screaming, her mouth foaming with blood. It was strange how hard the things wedged themselves into the cartilege; sometimes I had to pull several times before I could loosen one, and it would come out followed by a gush of blood. The light on the floor was poor and the work was hard; at the end of two hours I was exhausted almost to utter numbness. The bitch was panting and weak; sometimes she moaned feebly; the floor was spattered with blood for three or four feet around. But she was clean of visible quills, and few seemed to have buried themselves; I washed her with disinfectant, poured a drink of warmish water into her mouth, and turned her loose; she staggered feebly to her feet, and walked over and lay down on the rug behind the stove. The entire inner surface of her mouth was devoid of membrane, was a bloody pulp; her head was a clotting spongy mass of blood. It had happened before, and she would survive it; we both of us knew it; she moved her tail feebly, and cautiously laid her head on her paws. In the morning some boys led the other dog in staggering; they had found him late the night before in the same condition as the bitch, and had taken him to the veterinary before bringing him home.

For the next week most of my free time was spent in nursing the dogs; my bed cover and my rugs were stained with blood; the corners of the room accumulated deeper and deeper dust; the dust lay under the bed in soft whorls; I was busy and very tired and slowly lost the habit of noticing. Once near the end of March, some friends of the Stones from the next town stopped by to see the old man; I explained his absence and asked them in for a cup of coffee. They came in dubiously, a tall silent old farmer and his grey small wife, the

two of them troubled by the combination of my books and my general affability and of the dire squalor in which I lived. The dogs sniffed them curiously, extending their raw and scabious heads, and I sent them back to the bed. The old people finally took their leave with great formality.

During the first week in April, Alvin appeared at the door to say that the house had been sold and that the new owner wished to take possession as soon as possible. I arranged for the room across the street and began to move at once. A Chinook had begun the day before Alvin's appearance and continued for three days; it was the last thaw of the season. On most of the hills the winter wheat was already high, and the hills lay green as the snow vanished. Far across the valley I could hear the puffing of a tractor, and now and then could see the tiny iron thing crawling rapidly in straight lines across the hills, appearing and disappearing suddenly and in unlikely ways, leaving black earth behind.

Now my belongings were moved, and I would stay in the new house until early June. My new landlord was a teamster with seven children and a tired wife. I should not be with them long enough to become acquainted. The children swarming about the little house bothered me, but I liked them in a way; they were a part of the season. Just outside my door was an old phonograph, which one of the older girls played incessantly. The grass was already green under my new window; the trees were in bud; the two white goats would kid in a week, and the kids, bloody and tottering at first would be within a few days leaping here and there in the cold shadows, balancing and spinning on a single foot, front or rear, it mattered little, nipping buds they would not care to eat, trying to make friends with the dogs, to the patient embarrassment of the dogs and the consternation of their mothers.

I thought back over the past months, of the manner in which I had been disturbed, uncentered, and finally pos-

sessed, as by a daemonic power. I remembered that I had read somewhere of a species of Eastern daemon who gains power over one only in proportion as one recognizes and fears him. I felt that I had been the victim of a deliberate and malevolent invasion, an invasion utilizing and augmenting to appalling and shadowy proportions all of the most elusive accidents of my life, thus giving to the contingent its effect of coherent and cumulative power. Finally, through some miscalculation on the part of the invader, or through some resurgence, unperceived but real, of my own identity, I had begun to recover myself. I had begun as a result of the immersion in the brute blood, in the crushed and struggling flesh, of the bitch. The invading power I could not identify. I felt it near me still, but slowly receding.

I got up from where I sat and stretched myself out in the sun. I was minutely aware of my movements, my inclinations, my bodily functions. I could not blink my eyes without being aware of the darkness; I knew I was tired. It was as if there were darkness evenly underlying the brightness of the air, underlying everything, as if I might slip suddenly into it at any instant, and as if I held myself where I was by an act of the will, from moment to moment. From far over the hills, I heard a low snoring drone, rising and falling, as if there were a lonely bull in a far pasture. A quick and powerful team, four abreast, drawing a wheel plow, came over the rise at the distance of a quarter of a mile. The plow came down the slope swiftly and started around the base of the hill to circle slowly upward again, the horses arching and rippling, the driver bending forward and moving rapidly here and there to urge them on. From the sound and from the strange movements of the driver, I recognized Eli. I lay back and closed my eyes. The sun poured steadily into me. In a month I should be leaving for Colorado. I would never return.

YVOR WINTERS

DOVES

I walked over the stubble hunting doves.

The dove's quick flight is a waving line like the contour of the
mountains;
He is dark like the mountain range above the sky;
He appears, flies over, and disappears; he is the horizon bird
of the Valley.

The dove alights wing-pointed like a milkweed;
His back is the color of milkweed and mullein;

The dove walks shaking like the sun-gleams on the stubble;
When he stands under an olive tree his red feet brighten the
ground.

At morning the tall olive branches where the dove roosts
Strain to reach the descending flood of sunlight;
At evening the dove circles over the olive trees while the sun
sinks;
He is a sun-bird of the Valley.

When I shoot you dove there will be red drops on your buff
and silver plumage;
They will be as startling as blazing fire in the Valley.
Your dark globular eyes will quaver;
They are as mysterious to me as the life clinging to the sun-
scorched seeds you eat.
There will be red drops, but they are like those left when the
hawk strikes;
The hawk too is a sun-bird of the Valley;
We are all of the Valley.

HOWARD BAKER

GASTON LACHAISE

PROBABLY no artist now working in this country is more generally misunderstood than Gaston Lachaise. His refusal to join any societies or to subscribe to the catchwords of any clique has isolated him in misapprehension.

To some people his nudes have seemed laden with grossness, though anyone who looks can see that their flesh is not debased, but as buoyant as a Gupta sculpture or the frescoes at Ajanta. And his small bronzes of parts of nudes turning handsprings have looked like mere freakishness. Yet no artist more eagerly embraces restrictions than Lachaise, or feels his inventiveness more stimulated by exact specifications. He is delighted to be bound down to making a relief on a given subject for a particular place and lighting, or to making a faithful likeness of any given horse or man. Many of the small bronzes are "freakish" simply because in making them Lachaise had to invent his own restrictions — had to invent the riddle as well as the answer to the riddle. And being a man of enterprise, he set himself the most intricate riddles he could devise. It is almost too much to ask of an artist that he invent his own problems. They should be im-

posed by the purpose for which the work is called into being. If Lachaise sometimes seems freakish, it is not because he is wayward, but because his strength has so few exact tasks laid upon it. If he had the glamour of a Paris studio, instead of the commonplace accessibility of 8th street, his wits would probably be given enough commands to wrestle with.

Lachaise may have inherited his love for creating according to specifications from his father, who was a cabinetmaker in Paris. Yet whatever it was that endowed him with this humility, it thereby enabled him to become the finest portrait sculptor now living — finer than Despiau because he is not caught in an elegant formula, and finer than Maillol because he is more various and alive. The concentration of individual life in Lachaise's heads often reminds one of Houdon, since both of them dramatize a character in action. Yet unlike Houdon, who builds up his heads by pellets applied to a core, Lachaise is a true sculptor, a stone cutter who chisels a block to uncover the head inside, so that the result retains something of the original block's massiveness.

Lachaise is the only sculptor in this country who handles his medium with the assurance of a master experienced in all its possibilities and too reverent to force them. He has so thoroughly assimilated the lessons of the past that he works healthily in tradition without having to express himself "in the style of" any particular period or artist. He never confuses the possibilities of various media, and so his drawings are not sketches for sculpture, not means to an end, but are ends in themselves and exist in their own right.

In a sense every figure of Lachaise's is a portrait — an individual struggling against a particular fate. He and Rouault seem to be the only two modern artists who strike at the heart of human tragedy — Rouault through the tragic persistence of the spirit, and Lachaise through the no less tragic exaltation of the flesh.

A. Hyatt Mayor

EMERSON

I

THROUGHOUT the nineteenth century there was a steady deterioration in the tone of American life and character. A study of Emerson may illuminate some of the causes for that deterioration. Emerson himself was a person of great moral strength and integrity; but the whole tendency of his philosophy was to destroy the tradition in which virtues such as his own could be cultivated.

"I unsettle all things," was his own boast. "No facts are to me sacred; none are profane; I simply experiment, an endless seeker with no Past at my back." It is true — more true than he realized — that his preaching unsettled all things; but his claim to represent homo Americanus — that mythical man-in-himself without teachers or ancestors — cannot be accepted. His own character owed everything to the past; and it was from the past — ultimately the European past — that he borrowed the weapons with which he cut his connections with it.

Emerson's virtues were of a kind that only develop in a long-established and well-ordered society. His self-assurance, his public spirit, his sensitiveness to moral values were the fruit of a social organism more stable and more compact than any that now exists in either Europe or America.

The New Englanders of that epoch had long memories. Their roots were back in medieval Europe; the original colonists had made in the new world a replica of their birthplace

and many customs which appear characteristically Yankee can be duplicated in the annals of medieval England. Immigrants had not become so numerous that they could not be absorbed. Concord, already two centuries old, had an air of permanence. There was little to indicate that another hundred years would not find Massachusetts still Puritan and its citizens still governing the Republic. When every particular seems to have its established place in the cosmic scheme, it is possible to find the universal in it; it was part of Emerson's strength that he could see universal laws in terms of his Concord neighbors.

Society was still rural. There were factories at Lowell; but Emerson saw little of industrialism and never understood it. The men among whom he lived had the strength and the wholeness of a life in direct contact with nature. Puritanism, though it tended always to produce bluntness of speech and eccentricity of behavior, had confirmed this healthy independence; and it had not wholly destroyed instinctive good taste and feeling for craftsmanship.

The whole of New England was permeated by a system of moral values; the function of all social organization was to cultivate them, and those persons who realized them most completely were honored by their neighbors. For two centuries piety, self-control, devotion to learning and the public interest had been ideals; ministers, scholars and statesmen had been an aristocracy. The Puritan values, compared with those of any community in Europe or the East, were cripplingly narrow; but when they were inherited by someone who was not temperamentally disposed to fight against them, their narrowness was partly compensated for by their strength. Emerson was such a person. Sprung from seven generations of ministers, abstemious by temperament, he accepted the New England morality without hesitation; it became so nearly nature in him that it never occurred to him to doubt it. He enjoyed, therefore, the advantage of harmony

with the world in which he lived; if he fought with his contemporaries it was not about values but about their application, because they paid only lip-service to virtues which both he and they acknowledged. He was not isolated from his environment, or compelled by its hostility to doubt himself.

The New England values rested on supernatural and traditional buttresses. Emerson's lifework was to remove those buttresses. He accepted the values so unquestioningly that he believed that they would remain, suspended in mid-air, so to speak, without any buttress whatsoever.

II

Emerson's mistake seems to have been due to the very perfection of his own character. He was an optimist because he was himself innocent of evil. A study of the chief defect in the New England religion will explain how this happened.

The medieval Catholic was never innocent of evil. Human nature was sinful; but the whole of that nature had once been good, and by grace it could be restored to its original perfection. The inordinate desire for worldly goods was a perversion of the love of supernatural good. The Catholic, therefore, studied his evil desires and, instead of suppressing them, endeavored to divert them to good ends. Catholic dogma provided a scheme of values by which desires could be evaluated and progressively reformed.

Puritanism, on the other hand, declared that the depravity of nature was hopeless. Any virtue which man might achieve was the work not of nature purified by grace but of grace alone; grace and nature, instead of coöperating, were eternally at war. Grace showed itself, for Luther and Calvin, in certain feelings, and, for the New England orthodoxy, in obedience to a code of moral laws summarized in the Decalogue. Nature, therefore, must be stifled; if possible, it must be driven below the level of consciousness, so that grace might be universal. The result was that many Puritans

obviously suffered from serious pathological aberrations; on the other hand, those in whom moral impulses were naturally weak were serene and innocent in the enjoyment of grace.

It seems evident that Emerson was never seriously troubled by the demands of the flesh; he had little physical vitality, and his Spartan life carried him safely through the disturbances of youth. He was educated into the strict Calvinist code, which persisted long after Calvinist theology had been abandoned. It is probable that most of the illegal impulses to which his nature may have been subject were suppressed before they became conscious. It is certain that he never felt any serious moral struggle within himself; his writings contain no trace of it. He once complained that novels which depicted sensual temptation were untrue to life.

A few indications of something pathological in his adjustment to life can be noticed. No Puritan, probably, was wholly free from it. He was, for example, naïvely shocked when, during his second visit to England, Carlyle and Dickens discussed the rarity of premarital chastity among Englishmen. And he was very unwilling to know the physical constituents of any dish set before him at dinner, checking such statements with the remark that it was "a perfect crystallization" or "made of roses." It is obvious, however, that in the main he was healthy.

A more robust contemporary said of him that he was "utterly unconscious of himself as either good or evil. He had no conscience, in fact, and lived by perception." This was also his own opinion. He proposed to inscribe the word "whim" over his doorpost; and he declared that "No law can be sacred to me but that of my nature. Good and bad are but names very readily transferable to that or this; the only right is what is after my constitution; the only wrong is what is against it." Yet in practice no man was ever freer from unworthy desires or stricter in obedience to what he

considered to be duty. If he had no conscience, it was because his constitution performed the same functions. The result was a philosophy valuable only for those who have suppressed the baser side of their nature with the same completeness. Not knowing what it was to be an erring human being, he was unable to prescribe for such.

III

Emerson's philosophy was a reaction against Unitarianism. Unitarianism had had too low an opinion of human nature; Emerson sinned in the opposite direction. Since other transcendentalists, notably Bronson Alcott and Theodore Parker, arrived more or less independently at identical conclusions, the movement was probably inevitable; it could have been saved from error only by the appearance of a genius who knew other parts of the world beside New England.

Unitarianism had rejected every dogma of traditional Christianity except supernatural revelation. It was based on the philosophy of John Locke. Man was not a sinner — it was impossible to *sin* against a God whose sole characteristic was his benevolence; but he was ignorant of how best to make himself happy (or virtuous, which meant the same thing, virtue being merely enlightened self-love) until Jesus was commissioned by God to instruct him. Religion, therefore, meant obedience to the commands of Jesus. Since there were no innate ideas and all knowledge was deduced from sensuous perception, any kind of mysticism was impossible. This dreary moralism, which virtually denied the existence of the soul, was preached by such men as Henry Ware and Andrews Norton, and was hailed as a release from superstition.

The transcendentalists reaffirmed the existence of the soul. Man, they declared, had an innate knowledge of religious truth, and religion meant a direct relationship between man and God.

To these ideas Emerson was predisposed by both character and education. His innocence convinced him that no external instruction was necessary in order to be good. Calvinist tradition, which reached him through his aunt, Mary Moody Emerson, taught him that man in a state of grace could approach God without intermediaries. At the age of seventeen he noted, while reading Price, that conceptions of good and evil were innate. From that time on he selected, in his reading, whatever harmonized with his new religious attitude; he neglected or condemned whatever was opposed to it. For the beliefs of Unitarianism he substituted a new set of beliefs. These beliefs were derived from books, and only the principles of their combination and certain deductions from them were in any way original. He adopted them because they explained his experience more adequately than those which he had rejected; but the same experience might, in a different intellectual environment, have been explained by wholly different beliefs. In other words his philosophy is to be judged on its merits as an intellectual structure, not accepted as the word of a man who had any unusually deep insight into reality.

Emerson's masters all belonged to the mystical tradition of religious thought. Mysticism is not incompatible with Christianity, and some of the greatest Christian philosophers have also been mystics. The mystical tradition has, however, been more often heretical than orthodox. At its origin it was definitely hostile to Christianity. Emerson becomes most intelligible when he is considered as a Christian heretic.

The core of heretical mysticism is the belief that the soul of man, not merely *like* God, as orthodox Christianity declares, is *of the same substance* as God; it is, therefore, untouched by original sin, has an innate knowledge of religious truth, and may attain to absolute union with the Godhead. Christian mystics modify these beliefs by admitting that the union of the soul with God is not so complete that it is absorbed in

God, and that even if the soul is good the will is still perverted and needs to be instructed by external authority. Mysticism also teaches a monism verging on pantheism.

The founder of European mysticism was Plotinus. The doctrines of Plotinus were given a Christian coloring by Dionysus the Areopagite. Dionysus was translated into Latin by John Scotus Erigena, through whom the heretical tradition was handed down to the medieval heretics and to a Catholic on the verge of heresy, Eckhart. The Germans who followed Eckhart influenced Luther, from whom Protestantism, and indirectly New England Puritanism, acquired mystical tendencies. More directly the tradition was inherited by various Protestant sects, notably the Quakers, by Jacob Boehme, and by Swedenborg. In the eighteenth century it influenced the German philosophers, especially Schelling, and by them it was passed on to their English interpreters, Coleridge and Carlyle. Emerson touched this chain of thought at various places. His especial masters were Plotinus and his immediate disciples, and the contemporary English and Germans. He was influenced also by Boehme, Swedenborg, the Quakers, and the English Christian Platonists; and he was predisposed to these ideas by his Calvinist background, in which, after the definitely Christian beliefs had been eliminated, only the mysticism remained.

Mystical philosophy was an attempt to explain a very specific experience. All genuine mystics agree remarkably in their descriptions of it. The mystic begins by withdrawing completely from the external world; he goes, said Tauler, into "the quiet solitude where no word is spoken, where is neither creature nor image nor fancy." He does not think of God; his God can be defined only by negatives; he must deny to God, said Albert of Cologne, "first of all, bodily and sensible attributes, then intelligible qualities, and lastly, that being which would keep him among created things." And when he has thus shut out every memory of the material

world, he arrives at what Tauler called "the quiet Desert of the Godhead, the Divine Darkness," and Eckhart "the end of all things" where is "the hidden Darkness of the eternal Godhead, unknown and never to be known." It follows that there can be no relationship between the mystical experience and conduct ("If I say God is good, it is not true," said Eckhart); when the mystic returns to the world he must obey the laws as before. Pseudo-mysticism, on the other hand, the mysticism of those who have not themselves had any genuine mystical experience, regards the divinity which man finds within himself as positive, giving positive commands — not as something so completely removed from sensible things that it can be described only in negatives. The medieval heresies were caused by pseudo-mysticism of this kind.

Emerson was a pseudo-mystic. He had mystical feelings, but no true mystical experience. His mysticism was founded on those moments of exhilaration, caused by a feeling of harmony between oneself and the external world, which everyone occasionally experiences. "Crossing a bare common," he said, "in snow puddles, at twilight, under a clouded sky, without having in my thoughts any occurrence of special good fortune, I have enjoyed a perfect exhilaration." "Standing on the bare ground — my head bathed by the blithe air and uplifted into infinite space, — all mean egotism vanishes. I become a transparent eyeball; I am nothing; I see all; the currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part or parcel of God."

The resultant philosophy was very similar to that preached by the heretical mystics of the middle ages.

IV

With the exception of "English Traits" nearly everything that Emerson wrote was an embroidering of a few very simple ideas. These ideas were as follows: God as moral law;

the world as an emanation from God; man as having divinity within himself; "self-reliance"; and a religion not of authority but of the spirit.

Emerson's conception of God was the result of his New England ancestry. Puritanism, forbidding the use of images or concrete symbols and insisting that man could know God directly, had seen Him chiefly as a law-giver; He had delivered the Ten Commandments on Sinai, and the purpose first of His Covenant with the Jews and afterwards of the Christian revelation was to induce men to obey those commandments. In each generation the Massachusetts churches had affirmed this moralism more emphatically, until with Unitarianism it had become the whole of religion. Emerson admitted that God might have other attributes besides morality, but, since he accepted the New England prohibition of images, man could not know those attributes. "We have faculties to perceive his laws," he said, "but himself how obscurely." For practical purposes God meant nothing except moral law. "My point is," he declared, "that the movement of the whole machine, the motive force of life, and of every particular life, is moral. . . . The iron of iron, the fire of fire, the ether and source of all the elements, is moral forces." This was Emerson's most important addition to the mystical tradition. By thus combining mysticism and Puritanism he manufactured a compound more anarchical than either of its elements had been alone.

That the world was an emanation from God was a doctrine which Emerson derived from Plotinus, and found confirmation of in the Indian mystics. He became not only a moralist but a pantheist. "I believe," he said, "in the omnipresence; that is, that the All is in each particle; that entire nature reappears in every leaf and moss."

Why, then, did the world appear to be partly evil? For this Emerson had two answers. The earlier in time was that evil should be considered not in itself but as a part of the cosmos.

We should "observe how finely in nature all these disagreeable individuals integrate themselves into a cleanly and pleasing whole." "God is promoted by the worst. . . . They perform a beneficence they know not of." "Scarce an infant or idiot exists who cannot somehow or other contribute to the wellbeing of the universe." This had been the answer given by Augustine and by Jonathan Edwards, and in Emerson's youth it was accepted by most of the Calvinist churches. Since Emerson had formulated it before he was eighteen it seems evident that he derived it from the intellectual atmosphere of his time. But whereas Edwards had seen this contrast between good and evil as aesthetic, to Emerson it was primarily moral. It became his law of compensation, which he explained, while still at Harvard, as due to "the intentions of Providence to limit human perfectibility and to bind together good and evil, like life and death, by indissoluble connections."

Emerson later added a second explanation, which he probably took from Plotinus, though he could have found it also in such Christian mystics as Augustine and St. Thomas or in Jonathan Edwards. This was that evil was a negation; it had no real existence. "Essence, or God," said Emerson, "is not a relation or a part, but the whole. . . . Nature, truth, virtue, are the influx from thence. Vice is the absence or departure of the same. Nothing, Falsehood, may indeed stand as the great Night or shade on which as a background the living universe paints itself forth, but no fact is begotten by it; it cannot work, for it is not. It cannot work any good; it cannot work any harm. It is harm inasmuch as it is worse not to be than to be."

If nature was an emanation from God, it followed that God could be found in nature. This had been a game often played by Christian mystics, who had found everywhere analogies for the Trinity and the Atonement. With Emerson, influenced chiefly by Swedenborg, it assumed a different

form; he found in nature manifestations of God's moral laws. "Every natural fact," he said, "is a symbol of some spiritual fact." "The laws of moral nature answer to those of matter as face to face in a glass." Heat was identical with love, and the laws of gravitation with purity of heart. "The axioms of physics translate the laws of ethics." The purpose of science was, therefore, not so much to discover the structure of the material universe as to shed light on God's moral laws. Nature was only a vast metaphor for morality; "what we ask of her is only words to clothe our thoughts." The attraction of science was in "the sublime delight with which the intellect contemplates each new analogy appearing between the laws of Nature and its own law of life." Correctly interpreted, all natural phenomena "hint or thunder to man the laws of right and wrong, and echo the Ten Commandments." "Wherever you enunciate a physical law," said Emerson, "I hear in it a moral rule."

This conception of science as a branch of ethics is scarcely nearer to the world of the modern physicist than primitive animism or the medieval search for theological symbols. Even those persons who believe that, because Eddington's matter is less solid than Clerk-Maxwell's, idealism is once more admissible, will hardly identify the law of gravitation with purity of heart.

If it were merely a poetic fancy, we might dismiss it as, in reading Augustine, we dismiss his mysticism of numbers. But, by an extraordinary confusion of the planes of being, Emerson proceeded to deduce important consequences. If the laws of nature were identical with those of morality, then to understand them and obey them was a form of virtue; success in other words was a result of moral goodness. "Success," said Emerson, "consists in close appliance to the laws of the world and since those laws are intellectual and moral, an intellectual and moral obedience." "Money . . . is, in its effects and laws, as beautiful as roses. Property keeps

the accounts of the world, and is always moral. The property will be found where the labor, the wisdom and the virtue have been in nations, in classes, and (the whole life-time considered, with the compensations) in the individual also." This was the basis of Emerson's optimism. "The league between virtue and nature," he said, "engages all things to assume a hostile front to its vice. The beautiful laws and substances of the world persecute and whip the traitor. He finds that things are arranged for truth and benefit." "An eternal, beneficent necessity is always bringing things right." Here was a transcendentalist reinterpretation of the Old-Testament Puritan belief that providence punished the wicked and rewarded the virtuous with riches. Among the Yankee farmers of Concord it had a little plausibility. But its effect was to justify new forces, which were soon to destroy the rural society in which Emerson lived.

That man had divinity within himself was a doctrine of mysticism; Emerson found it in Plotinus and the Indians. He arrived at it by way of the distinction between the reason and the understanding which he took from Coleridge. "Our compound nature," he said, "differences us from God, but our reason is not to be distinguished from the divine Essence." Emerson considered this to be the most important feature of his philosophy. "In all my lectures," he said, "I have taught one doctrine, namely, the infinitude of the private man." Emerson's use of it strongly recalls his ancestral Puritanism. Puritanism had declared that elect persons, after their conversion, had the grace of God within them, which the individual must obey. "Philosophy," said Emerson, "shakes hands at last with the simplest Methodist and teaches one fact with him, namely, that it is the grace of God, — all grace, — no inch of space left for the impertinence of human will." Calvin's rigid distinction between the elect and the damned reappeared in Emerson. Emerson the democrat could use words of the greatest contempt for the masses,

who did not obey the Oversoul within themselves; they were "animals," he said, "in state of pupilage, and nearer the chimpanzee." But whereas for Calvin salvation was dependent on God's election and was reserved for a few, Emerson looked forward to a day when all men would surrender to the Oversoul.

By "self-reliance" Emerson meant obedience to the Oversoul; as his son remarked, it should more accurately have been called "God-reliance." Man, he said, must surrender his individual will and intellect, and act only in obedience to the instincts of his soul; these instincts were the Oversoul expressing itself in him, and were identical with the forces which governed the material universe; they were, therefore, moral, and he who obeyed them could do no wrong. Man was great in so far as he made himself a vehicle for the divine spirit. This abandonment Emerson preached in the most uncompromising terms. "As the traveller who has lost his way throws his reins on his horse's neck and trusts to the instinct of the animal to find his road, so must we do with the divine animal who carries us through this world," he said.

All religion is a self-surrender of the individual to something larger than himself. In traditional Christianity the individual surrendered to the City of God, whose earthly representative was the Church; the Church gave him moral standards which he used to evaluate his own experiences. Emerson recommended that the individual should surrender to his own unconscious. "The unconscious," he said, "is ever the act of God Himself." This doctrine had two causes. By combining mysticism with Puritanism Emerson had decided that the moral sentiment, the instincts of the individual, and the Oversoul were all identical. And he never found cause to alter his opinion because the strength of the moral censorship which his Puritan education had given him prevented immoral instincts from entering his consciousness — or at least

from disguising themselves as angels of light. He did not shrink from deductions even more remarkable; instinct was still divine when it expressed itself in children and in crowds; children were naturally good; and as for crowds, a common danger or desire would "knit a multitude into one man," and rouse that "giant overcome with sleep," "the generic soul," whose eyes would "straight pierce through all appearances" and his tongue tell "what should be in the latest time."

Surrender to an impulse is good or bad according to the nature of the impulse. Spontaneous goodness is usually the result of previous discipline. Emerson had been disciplined, and the impulses to which he surrendered were good. He did not find this surrender easy: "I have my own stern claims and perfect circle," he said; "if any one imagines that this law is lax, let him keep its commandment one day." Yet he never admitted a need for discipline, and he forbade any attempt to judge an impulse; rational or external moral standards would be an interference with the Oversoul. "Long before the opinion comes the instinct that a particular act is . . . wrong," he declared. "First thoughts are from God." And even more definitely: "Our moral nature is vitiated by any interference of our will. People represent virtue as a struggle, and take to themselves great airs upon their attainments, and the question is everywhere vexed when a noble nature is commended, whether the man is not better who strives with the temptation. But there is no merit in the matter. Either God is there or He is not there. We love characters in proportion as they are impulsive and spontaneous." Abandonment alone was good, no matter to what instincts or passions the individual abandoned himself. "What is love, and why is it the chief good, but because it is an overpowering enthusiasm? Never self-possessed or prudent, it is all abandonment."

Emerson's "self-reliance" was a logical result of Protestant doctrine. Luther had taught that God communicated His

grace directly to the souls of the elect; the result was to substitute, for the guidance of an external and rational system of values, the supremacy of Feeling. As long as Christianity survived in some form Feeling was admitted as divine only when its impulses had biblical justification, and in the orthodox churches of New England obedience to the bible had almost wholly taken the place of Feeling; but the various antinomian sects had declared, like Emerson, that by obeying their wildest whims and impulses they were obeying God. Though, however, Emerson was predisposed to "self-reliance" by his ancestry, it was from Neo-Platonic mysticism that he actually deduced it. Not having had the true mystical experience, he imagined that the God in the soul was positive and gave positive commands. The heretical mystics of the middle ages had fallen into the same error and for the same reasons, though they did not have Emerson's justification of regarding the Oversoul as primarily moral. Amaury of Bene, for example, who had studied Erigena's translation of Dionysus, was burnt at the stake in 1204 for teaching Emersonian "self-reliance." The Beghards and the Brethren of the Free Spirit, later in the same century, declared that "more faith should be given to the things which come from the human heart than to the gospels; the soul's Inward Voice is safer than the truths preached by the Church." According to their enemies they claimed "to be divine by nature, and they make no distinction between God and themselves." "Whenever their nature urges them in any direction," said Tauler, "they follow the impulse, so that the freedom of the spirit may be unhindered." Similar doctrines were preached in the sixteenth century by the German Anabaptists and in the seventeenth by the English Ranters.

Emerson's religion of the spirit was the consequence of "self-reliance." The man who obeyed the Oversoul within himself needed the aid of no institution. "The relations of the soul to the divine spirit are so pure that it is profane to seek

to interpose helps." Poetic symbols might be useful, but the error of all established religions was in treating them as more than symbols; it was "the mistake of an accidental and individual symbol for an universal one." "The history of all hierarchies seems to show that all religious error consisted in making the symbol too stark and solid and was at last nothing but an excess of the organ of language." "Self-reliance" made all moral or religious authority unnecessary: "He, who has the law-giver, may with safety not only neglect, but even contravene every written commandment." Such a man, being for all intents perfect, needed no secular authority either: "The appearance of character makes the state unnecessary." If there were "a reliance on the moral sentiment and a sufficient belief in the unity of things," then society could be "maintained without artificial restraints, as well as the solar system." This was the only reformation that was needed; teach men to obey the Oversoul, and not only wickedness and misery but "toothache and indigestion, cramp and croup, pain and poverty" would vanish.

Emerson expected the reformation in the near future. "The distinction of the new age" would be, he believed, "the refusal of authority." There was "a steady tendency of the thoughtful and virtuous to a deeper belief and reliance on spiritual facts." "This gradual casting off of material aids, and the growing trust in the private self-supplied powers of the individual" was "the affirmative principle of the recent philosophy." "The next age will behold God in the ethical laws — and will regard natural history, private fortunes and politics . . . as illustrations of those laws." In other words, there was to be a new revelation and a new race of men. Emerson sometimes assumed the air of a John the Baptist prophesying a new Messiah. "The man who shall be born," he said, "whose advent men and events prepare and foresee, is one who shall enjoy his connection with a higher life." "I look for the new Teacher that . . . shall show that the

Ought, that Duty, is one thing with Science, with Beauty and with Joy."

This mystical looking-forward to a miraculous future was strengthened by another mysticism — Emerson's faith in America. America has always inspired optimistic prophecies (Jonathan Edwards expected to see the rebirth of the Messiah); and the idea is by no means dead that in the new world there must inevitably be a new culture — a spontaneous generation from the soil, without parents or intelligible causes. In practice, since hatred of European institutions has been the chief cause for immigration, the American dream has usually been of a world where men can live without those institutions. For Emerson America meant freedom from all authority; every American would be guided by the Spirit. "A nation of men will for the first time exist," he declared, "because each believes himself inspired by the Divine Soul which also inspires all men." He believed that it would be the function of the United States to realize the spiritual religion of the future, and to embody the moral sentiment "in the laws, in the jurisprudence, in international law, in political economy."

As a matter of fact, though Emerson did not realize it, this delusion first appeared at least a thousand years before the discovery of America. Almost since the foundation of Christianity heretical mystics dreamed of a coming Age of the Holy Ghost, when by some more or less miraculous revolution discipline and authority would be superseded and man would enjoy direct communication with God. The Montanists in the third century after Christ expected "the Church of the Spirit by means of the spiritual man, not the Church which consists of a number of bishops." Erigena prophesied an Age of the Spirit, and the prophecy was repeated by the Abbot Joachim and by Amaury of Bene; the Spiritual Franciscans and other medieval heretics preached the coming of the Paraclete, influencing even orthodox Catholics like Dante.

After the Reformation the Anabaptists, the Ranters, and some other Protestant sects declared that because man would be guided directly by the Spirit Church and State were no longer needed.

This delusion has led always to the same consequences. For example: The marital tie is conspicuously an institution which man needs because he is imperfect. All the more extreme heretical mystics abolished marriage, declaring that the affections must be free and man should not restrict his love to a single person. The Vermont perfectionists in Emerson's lifetime made every male in their colony the husband of every female. From the same starting point Emerson arrived in due course at the same conclusion, though he expressed it much more cautiously. "The great and crescive self," he said, "rooted in absolute nature, supplants all relative existence and ruins the kingdom of mortal friendship and love. Marriage (in what is called the spiritual world) is impossible. . . . The universe is the bride of the soul. All private sympathy is partial."

It is instructive to see how the old dream of the heretics, transplanted to a fresh soil, acquired an appearance of reality from union with the new dream of America.

V

Historically, Emerson is important because he helped to destroy the New England theocracy. After him it was impossible for educated Puritans to accept the Christian myth or to think in theological terms; religion meant a vague respect for the moral sentiment, whether embodied in Christ or Socrates or Emerson himself. Emerson was so typically a product of New England, and his philosophy was so obviously a counter-irritant to Unitarianism, that it is not surprising that in his own section he should have had a large following. But, since he thought in terms which the modern world has almost forgotten, and since his position can easily

be plotted on the map of the Christian heresies, it is strange that he should have had, and still have, so much influence in the world at large.

Something was due, no doubt, to his championship of America and his declarations of cultural independence; but a more important reason was that the main tendencies of his religious philosophy agreed with the secular beliefs of his, and our, time.

The modern faith is liberalism. Liberalism treats man as an abstract entity, not as a member of some social organism which moulds his habits and beliefs. Viewed from another angle, it appears as a denial of original sin. Man needs no external values, embodied in institutions, to guide or discipline him; he is happiest when left most completely free for self-expression. The purpose of all social organization is not to promote good living but to protect the individual's life and freedom. This negative and dissolvent force, which offers no positive ideals but destroys all previous ideals, is not confined to any part of the world; but it has encountered least opposition in America. Its driving force has been its adoption by the new industrialism warring against agrarian conservatism. Emerson's thought was medieval, contrasted with that of Bentham or Rousseau; but it has contributed to the same result — the destruction of all moral authority. Men forget that he identified the law of gravitation with purity of heart and that by "self-reliance" he meant God-reliance; they remember him as the prophet of self-reliance.

The will, however, needs moral authority, and home-made substitutes do not inspire the same confidence. Liberal philosophy solves the problem by denying the existence of the will. In practice the result is that one submits oneself to the tides of emotion, in the hope that they will overwhelm any rational doubt or control. Here again liberalism is reinforced by Emerson. He also counselled abandonment and spon-

taneity, declaring that our nature was "vitiated by any interference of our will," though he reached this conclusion by a wholly different route. "The one thing which we seek with insatiable desire," he said, "is to forget ourselves, to be surprised out of our propriety, to lose our sempiternal memory and to do something without knowing how or why; in short to draw a new circle. Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm."

Emerson himself, moreover, inspires the utmost confidence. This apostle of Dionysus was a water-drinker, a good husband and father, a citizen of the utmost integrity. He rose at six, studied assiduously, and for recreation walked in the woods. He had a gift for phrase-making rarely equalled in English literature; and though he may not have been a great writer, everything that he wrote had the texture of authentic literary personality. Emerson's virtues were the result of those institutions which his philosophy helped to destroy; but their effect was to justify that philosophy, to make it seem safe and respectable.

Nobody will deny that Emerson's philosophy gave too much encouragement to the worst tendencies of the time, to anarchical individualism, unchecked pursuit of wealth, and contempt for public spirit. Emerson himself was not blind to the faults of his contemporaries. When he curbed his moralistic propensities and applied himself to observation, he was always admirable (his best book is probably "English Traits"). Such a statement, for example, as that Americans had no passions but only appetites is worth all the "Essays." Unfortunately, he was unable to readjust his philosophy in order to counter the evils which he observed. In later life he lacked vitality for original thought; beyond the age of forty he merely organized his stock of ideas and repeated them. For the last thirty years of his life he uttered only more and more dogmatic statements of his beliefs; and every fresh realization of degeneracy round him called out only a more

emphatic assertion that confidence in the moral sentiment was the panacea for all human ills.

"I see movements, I hear aspirations," he said in 1867, "but I see not how the great God prepares to satisfy the heart in the new order of things. No Church, no State emerges; and when we have extricated ourselves from all the embarrassments of the social problem, the oracle does not yet emit any light on the mode of individual life. A thousand negatives it utters, clear and strong, on all sides; but the sacred affirmative it hides in the deepest abyss." "The gracious motions of the soul — piety, adoration, — I do not find." Now that the old religions were dead, "we are alarmed in our solitude; we would gladly recall the life that so offended us." "Frightful is the solitude of the soul which is without God." In these words there was a note of despair, and Emerson's remedies did little to dispel it. "Heroic resolutions," he said, were needed. "A new crop of geniuses" might be born who "with happy heat and a bias for theism" would "bring asceticism and duty and magnanimity into vogue again." God's communications with mankind were as yet intermittent, but later there might be "a broad and steady altar-flame."

If only the birth of "a new crop of geniuses" could save society, then society was probably doomed. The younger generation in New England took the hint. Some of them were already flying to Europe or to the Roman Church — a tendency which Emerson noticed and deplored. The remainder took shelter from a world of appetites behind the Genteel Tradition. This new conservatism was founded on culture and good taste; but because it had no real faith in the values which it adopted, because it had lost all vital links with any tradition, it could not absorb new experiences or master its environment. Fear and not a religious affirmation was its root, and therefore it was desiccated and without vitality.

HENRY BAMFORD PARKES

A JOURNEY AWAY

1

SEA–KIN
we have broken away,
Our hearts are grounded
in the waterways,
Our butts foam
in the current like a keel.
We pray you
let your wings blaze
in the sterling course.

2

Above the fireplace
the portrait of an old man
with a fowling piece
and period whiskers
Sir William Cavendish
6th Bart. and brevet-major
11th Hussars.

Crest
and shield: a demi-man
affronté in armor,
the helmet adorned
with three feathers,
holding in the dexter
hand a scimitar.
Two miner's picks.
Omne Solum Forti Patria.

3

We climbed the stairs,
the white dress flowing
from the lady's sides.

She turned the pottery lamp.
How shall I wear you,
center crown stone/great
blue solitaire of sentiment?
They will say I am Jewish.

She took my hand and pointed out
the men's shops with terrazzo floors,
the city desks, the shoe windows,
the Carlton waiters with a canapé
of coral lobster, 666 for colds
and fevers, the suburban shore drive,
the old man hammering in the doll shop.

So light the room, like air
about a willow branch.
A glass stands on the golden table.
Prints of St. Marks, The Bargello,

Mme. Lebrun and Her Daughters.
A glass vase with a spinning stem.

"This is my daughter Sue"

and sat adamic as with jug
and towel for a painter.

A young girl's study. Lace
and nimbus from the north.
She played a classical pianoforte
clef-wandering sweet pinna tremolo
a Chippendale in a dominoes etude:
the Bird pirriko pirriko prrrk
ia ia
the leghorn rustling in the brush
the creek between the rockshelves
Nancy with a bunch of wet grapes.

4

A light in the morning
crystallized upon the crest
entranced the virgin.
There the fawn stood
hunted, bated, sensi-
tized and sainfoin breath,
being unknown to himself
a cornea of light.

5

The black arena bull bled in the neck.
The ladies are gone. I throw a rose
upon the black loins. Tomorrow
another bull fight and the gall-
irk of cafard and skeptic.

6

The wayfarer met the passerby
in death's champaign of flowers.
As the lint blew through their skulls
they spoke discreetly of the next world,
of the slobland to the left
and the coprolite above.
The headvoices made a meaningless aside
in keeping with the serious scene.

7

One o'clock. A rainy night.
The sea air darkens on the wheelhouse.
The binnacle glows.
"Ho there! Ho!"
The Frisco Cross, a twin-screw tanker,
burns in the hull.
"Who are you?"
A dry face. The chronometer tilts.
"All
lights burning brightly, Sir." Ist Ruhe.

CARL RAKOSI

SCENERY AND GEORGE WASHINGTON

A NOVEL OR A PLAY

CHARACTERS

SCENERY AND GEORGE WASHINGTON

Page 1

SCENERY may be autumn scenery.

George Washington is mentioned. He is also remembered.

Autumn scenery is warm if the fog has lifted.

And the moon has set in the day-time in what may be drifting clouds. It sets very quickly and this is when, any one is watching and it is setting in the day-time when the sun is shining. Any sign is a good sign.

Page 2

Scenery if seen makes a home a home of their seeing how happily she may choose flowers. Will she feed him. George Washington is a memory he may be welcome. Nor indeed with theirs as he may be welcome. Scenery if in the autumn is beautiful and very resembling and we are content to have it.

What is scenery. Scenery is a pleasure. And they might say they have not forgotten.

Nor if they are happy with the scenery they might say that scenery is their amount and they may nor will it be that it is not forgotten. For them or for themselves. In autumn.

Page 3

In autumn there are birds singing in some trees. The scenery in autumn is lovely.

The George Washington is not a memory.

He has been in the country.

Autumn scenery is lovely and as it is a good season and there is little money it is easy to find men workers.

George Washington was the father of his country. He was first in war first in peace and first in the hearts of his countrymen his life is not a memory.

The scenery of autumn is very lovely. There are many walnuts and the marshes are not empty nor are the rocks of trees nor of their color nor is there any lack of plenty.

Page 4

She may prefer flowers to scenery roses to rivers dahlias to pleasures and daisies to their place. It is very often lovely to see scenery. Autumn scenery may be like summer that is as to climate.

George Washington spelled alike and born in February. All who will love to peal nuts and even not mean to leave any one or rather in the autumn seeing nuts lie will stoop and get them or else not may be said to be resembling to George Washington in respect to their birthday being in the month of February.

If it rains it spoils the autumn scenery because it causes the leaves to fall.

Poplars in fours not an autumn landscape fours of poplars not an autumn landscape fours in poplars not autumn scenery. A dog does what he should.

They will come to be ready to find autumn warm it may be it may very well be warm in autumn.

George Washington may be easy to write.

Page 5

To find autumn scenery. They will see it readily. They will admire it and it is agreeable find it agreeable when it is warm.

George Washington.

Weigh feathers. This makes autumn scenery and it is very beautiful.

As well be happy.

George Washington was and is the father of his country.

No not by themselves they will be unknown.

Autumn scenery is beautiful and it is regularly satisfied as an occasion. They will occasionally visit me.

Page 6

Autumn or scenery brothers close or well. Will they care for the color. Which they make of the vine. Because it is very well if it must matter.

In autumn it is very warm.

And therefor they will please those who say the others told him how soon in the day. At day break he saw her and he went toward her and she was well on her way. Any day earlier any day. On an autumn day. It is dangerous. Because they might be there. They always are because it is the place for them to be.

But to her. Did it. Any autumn day is different from any summer day or any winter day.

George Washington is pleased to come that is all who are ready are ready to rule.

Page 7

Please do not let me wander.

Page 8

She is very sleepy. George Washington. She is very sleepy. The autumn scenery when seen at a distance need not necessarily be tempted by wind. They may clear skies. But not a new moon. In autumn a new moon is well advanced. And a cloud can never cover it partly or be gracious rather to like red and blue all out but you. George Washington is famous as a nation.

Page 9

She may be dark it may be dark and as well. He colors with pleasure as well.

The autumn landscape is warmer with a full moon.

It should not be a disturbance if they can mistake a bird for a bat or a bat for a bird and find it friendly.

They may be three to sing severally that George Washington may be seen to be beautifully with when they dwell then upon the beauty and autumn beauty of autumn scenery. One in two and one in three and one in one. And they may be not with some which may be that they are better with me. One and one. Or may be made a sum.

Page 10

Autumn scenery can be called summer.

It can also be dry and rain.

It need be only when they are and were well and happy.

They may include their reception.

It is part of the time that it is an advantage.

What is autumn landscape they cannot plough.

What also is autumn landscape since as because they can collect all that is grown.

What do they like in autumn landscape after a while they like it to turn into rain.

George Washington may easily have come and gone also have gone also have come. And so they think it very welcome.

So much of it turning rapidly from trimming to feeling and from feeling to varying.

May they be thankful. In case of which pleases. An autumn landscape pleases. And there is sun.

Page 11

If it rains will it stop if it rains will it go on in autumn.

Each one of twenty men and twenty women each one of any men or any women may be in place of men and women. And so be ready. Are you ready yet. Not yet.

It is very often thoughtless to ask for more than they are needing.

And in such a way if it is raining in autumn it is easy to wait for rose planting and also to ask a favor. Will they grant. Very likely.

There is warm rain in autumn and cold wind and a large sun and a moon easily not seen as coming and as staying. They may be very likely as well to satisfy. And particularly at a distance.

What could be done at noon can be done at night.

They will think very well of having some rain again. George Washington is often broken. As very well.

Page 12

Put you where they can.

When they see they may.

Or they will.

Autumn is made of they well and willing to go about at night when the weather is warm and when the weather is cold when it is wet and a pleasure to them as they may be easily in and out.

Autumn scenery is not made of dahlias.

Autumn scenery either.

Autumn scenery is not made of dahlias nor of whether they gather dahlias.

Autumn scenery may be nicely when the weather is warm and the snow not cold autumn scenery may be nicely when they can and the autumn scenery is autumn scenery in September to January. For which they may be going to thank. And so George Washington is meant to be peopled.

A play and an event.

Also a story and their birth.

Possibly the men and their arrival.

May be they will.

Page 13

Ought fourteen to be very well when they will be thirteen. And so they understand distress in the country districts which they have not there not in the. Country districts.

Page 14

All call exuberance or all call or all sigh with pleasure that they enjoy their exuberance in not alone not only made in theirs and with enjoy.

An autumn scenery may be debated. They may claim rich and poor in moon and mist and very clearly a lit house. Or other may they order or in a claim refuse a house made a name.

Autumn scenery they call autumn scenery.

She may relish autumn scenery.

Nor will they place autumn scenery unaware.

Should for them declare. They declare. Nor indeed. In choice.

Autumn scenery has hope of a welfare in summer. Or where.

Autumn scenery she feels nicely.

Why is George Washington ought.

Pleasure in alike autumn scenery.

GERTRUDE STEIN

IN MEMORIAM: HART CRANE

THE career of Hart Crane will be written by later critics as a chapter in the neo-Symbolist movement, but its distinctive features will make an historical view of his work misleading and incomplete. Like most poets of his time in America, Crane discovered Rimbaud through Eliot and the Imagists; it is certain that long before he had done any of his best work he had come to believe himself the spiritual heir of the French poet. And of course any short view of modern poetry will place Crane among the Symbolists. While it is true that he mastered the Symbolist use of metaphor, it is also true that this technique is an historical feature of all poetic language. Whether Crane's style is Symbolistic, or should, in many instances, like the first six or seven stanzas of "The River," be called Elizabethan, is a point of argument for future critics. A comparison of *The Bridge* with *A Season in Hell* shows but little essential affinity for Rimbaud. Rimbaud achieved "disorder" out of an implicit order, after a deliberate cultivation of "derangement," but in our time the derangement of our intellectual systems is accomplished; with Crane the disorder was original and fundamental. That is

the special quality of his mind that belongs peculiarly to our own time. His aesthetic problem, however, was more general; it was the historic problem of romanticism.

Harold Hart Crane was born in Garrettsville, Ohio, on July 4, 1899. His birthplace is a small town near Cleveland, in the old Western Reserve, a region which, as distinguished from the lower portions of the state, where people from the Southern up-country settled, was populated largely by New England stock. He seems to have known little of his ancestry, but he frequently said that his maternal forbears had given Hartford, Connecticut, its name, and that they went "back to Stratford-on-Avon" — a notion that gave him distinct pleasure. His formal education was slight. After the third year at high school, it ceased, and he worked in his father's candy factory. He often told me that money had been set aside for his education at college, but that it had been used for other purposes. With the instinct of genius he read the great poets, but he never acquired much objective mastery of literature, or even of the history of his country — a defect of considerable interest when we remember that his most ambitious poem is an American epic.

In any ordinary sense Crane was not an educated man; in many respects he was one of the most ignorant men I ever knew. There will be a Crane legend, like the Poe legend — it should be fostered because it will help to make his poetry popular — and the scholars will decide it was a pity that so great a talent lacked early advantages. It is probable that he was incapable of the usual discipline of education, and probable, too, that the eclectic education of his time would have diffused his impulse, and killed his talent. His poetry not only has defects of the surface, it has a defect of vision; but its peculiar value cannot be separated from its limitations. Its great qualities are inextricably bound up with a special focus of the intellect and sensibility, and it would be foolish to wish that his mind had been differently organized.

What I have called his ignorance may be put in moral terms that will help not only to define his poetry but to connect it with the manner of his death. The story of his suicide is already well known. The information that I have seems authentic, but it is incomplete and subject to excessive interpretation. Towards the end of April he embarked on the S. S. *Orizaba* bound from Vera Cruz to New York. On the night of April 26th he got into a brawl with some sailors; was severely beaten and robbed. At noon of the next day, the ship being in the Caribbean a few hours out of Havana, he rushed from his stateroom clad in pajamas and overcoat, walked through the smoking-room out on to the deck, and then the length of the ship to the stern, where without hesitation he made a perfect dive into the sea. It is said that a life-preserver was thrown to him; he either did not see it or did not want it. By the time the ship had turned back he had disappeared; whether he forced himself down — for a moment he was seen swimming — or was seized by a shark, as the captain believed, cannot be known. After a search of thirty-five minutes his body was not found, and the *Orizaba* put back upon her course. Every life has several different ends, one as appropriate as another, but this end was the most appropriate imaginable for Hart Crane.

Such an opinion cannot be proved; it is a judgment upon the life of a man whom I knew for ten years as a close friend. Suicide was the sole act of will left to him short of a profound alteration of his character. I think the evidence of this is the locked-in sensibility, the insulated egoism, of his poetry — a subject that I shall return to. The circumstance of his death was sentimentally perfect: a large portion of his finest imagery was of the sea, chiefly of the Caribbean:

> O minstrel galleons of Carib fire,
> Bequeath us to no earthly shore until
> Is answered in the vortex of our grave
> The seal's wide spindrift gaze toward paradise.

His verse is full of splendid images of this order, a rich symbolism for an implicit pantheism that, whatever may be its intrinsic merit, he had the courage to vindicate with death in the end.

His pantheism was not passive and contemplative; it rose out of the collision between his own locked-in sensibility and the ordinary forms of experience. Every poem is a thrust of that sensibility into the world: his defect lay in his inability to face out the moral criticism implied in the failure to impose his will upon experience.

The structural defect of *The Bridge* is due to this fundamental contradiction of purpose: in one of his best poems, "The Wine Menagerie," he exclaims, "New thresholds, new anatomies!" — new sensation, but he could not distinguish between the new sensation and a rational form for it. His prevailing tone is the historic and sullen irrationality of romanticism. Pantheism is a philosophy of sensation without point of view. An epic is a judgment of human action, an implied evaluation of a civilization, a way of life. In *The Bridge* the civilization that contains the hell of the section called "The Tunnel" is the same civilization that the poet apostrophizes in "Cape Hatteras": there is no reason why the subway should be a fitter symbol of damnation than the aeroplane: both were produced by the same mentality on the same moral plane. At one moment Crane faces his predicament of blindness to any rational order of value, and knows that he is damned; but he cannot face it long, and he tries to rest secure upon the mere intensity of sensation. To the vision of the abyss in "The Tunnel," a vision that Dante passed through midway of this mortal life, Crane had no alternative: when it became too harrowing he cried to his Pocahontas, a typically romantic and sentimental symbol:

> Lie to us, — dance us back our tribal morn!

It is probably the final word of romanticism in this century. When Crane saw that his leading symbol, the bridge, would

not cover all the material of his poem, he could not sustain it ironically in the classical manner. Alternately he asserts it and abandons it because fundamentally he does not understand it. The idea of bridgeship is an elaborate metaphor, a sentimental conceit leaving the inner structure of the poem confused.

Yet some of the great poetry of modern times is in *The Bridge*. Its inner confusion is a phase of the inner cross-purposes of the time. Crane was one of those men whom every age seems to select as the spokesman of its spiritual organization; they give the age away. The accidental features of their lives, their place in life, their very heredity, seem to fit them for their rôle; even their vices contribute to their preparation. Crane's biographer will have to study the early influences that confirmed him in narcissism, and thus made him typical of the rootless spiritual life of our time; the character formed by those influences represents an immense concentration, and becomes almost a symbol, of American life in this age.

Crane's poetry has incalculable moral value: it reveals our defects in their extremity. I have said that he knew little of the history of his country. It was not a mere defect of education, but a defect, in the spiritual sense, of the modern mind. Professor Charles A. Beard has immense information about American history, but understands almost none of it: Crane lacked the sort of indispensable understanding of his country that a New England farmer has who has never been out of his township. *The Bridge* attempts to include all American life, but it covers the ground with seven-league boots and like a sight-seer sees nothing. With reference to its leading symbol, it has no subject-matter. It represents the effort of a solipsistic sensibility to locate itself in the external world, to establish fixed points of reference.

Criticism may well set about isolating the principle upon which Crane's poetry is organized. Powerful verse over-

whelms its admirers, and betrays them into more than technical imitation. That is one of the great arguments of Platonism against literature; it is the quality of art that raises up literary schools and traditions. Crane not only ends the romantic era in his own person; he ends it logically and morally. (This does not mean that the romantic impulse may not rise and flourish again.) The finest passages in his work are isolated re-creations of single moments in the stream of sensation; beyond that circle he goes at his peril; for there lies the discrepancy between the sensuous fact, the perception, and its symbol, which plunges him into bathos and sentimentality. A true symbol has in it, within the terms of its properties, all the qualities that the artist is able to attribute to it; but the "bridge" is empty and static, it has no derivable content, and the poet's attribution to it of the qualities of his own mind is arbitrary and bathetic. That explains the fragmentary and often unintelligible framework of the poem. There was no complete action in terms of which the distinct moments of perception could be clarified.

Far from being the problem of Rimbaud, Crane's problem was thus the problem of Keats, and *The Bridge* is a failure in the sense that *Hyperion* is a failure, and with comparable magnificence. Crane's problem, being farther removed from the epic tradition, was actually more difficult than Keats', and his treatment of it was doubtless the most satisfactory possible in our time. Beyond the terms of the problem of pure sensation and a relevant symbolism lies the total destruction of art. By attempting an extreme solution of the romantic problem Crane proved that it is finally insoluble.

He wrote about a dozen of the finest lyrics of his time, and I think it exact praise to say that he had the most nearly perfect sense of lyrical form in his generation. Like Keats again, his best work is the creation of single effects that do not require the support of an abstract framework. Being concerned with the implications of the single moment of

experience, he necessarily developed a great variety of rhythms; he rehabilitated blank verse, being the only poet of his age who could combine in it rhetoric, conversation, and discursive thought. In "Praise for an Urn," written when he was twenty-two, he produced the finest elegy in American poetry. "The River," a part of *The Bridge* but complete in itself, is his most complex and sustained performance, a masterpiece of aesthetic form. Here are specimens of his quality:

> The slant moon on the slanting hill
> Once moved us toward presentiments
> Of what the dead keep, living still,
> And such assessments of the soul
>
> As, perched in the crematory lobby,
> The insistent clock commented on,
> Touching as well upon our praise
> Of glories proper to the time.
> (Praise for an Urn)

Of the sea:

> Mark how her turning shoulders wind the hours . . .
>
> Where icy and bright dungeons lift
> Of swimmers their lost morning eyes,
> And ocean rivers, churning, shift
> Green borders under stranger skies,
>
> Steadily as a shell secrets
> Its beating leagues of monotone,
> Or as many waters trough the sun's
> Red kelson past the cape's wet stone . . .

From "The River":

> Behind
> My father's cannery works I used to see
> Rail-squatters ranged in nomad raillery,
> The ancient men — wifeless or runaway
> Hobo-trekkers that forever search

An empire wilderness of freight and rails.
Each seemed a child, like me, on a loose perch,
Holding to childhood like some termless play.
John, Jake, or Charley, hopping the slow freight
Memphis to Tallahassee — riding the rods,
Blind fists of nothing, humpty-dumpty clods. . . .

Time like a serpent down her shoulder, dark,
And space, an eaglet's wing, laid on her hair . . .

Damp tonnage and alluvial march of days —
Nights turbid, vascular with silted shale
And roots surrendered down of moraine clays:
The Mississippi drinks the farthest dale.

O quarrying passion, undertowed sunlight!
The basalt surface drags a jungle grace
Ochreous and lynx-barred in lengthening might;
Patience! and you shall reach the biding place . . .

From "Atlantis":

O Thou steeled Cognizance whose leap commits
The agile precincts of the lark's return . . .

A year ago just as he was leaving New York for Mexico, Crane asked Slater Brown if he thought that his poetry would be remembered.

ALLEN TATE

RUTH AND BOAZ

And it came to pass at midnight that the man was afraid, and turned himself; and behold, a woman lay at his feet.

I WAKE, the turn of night. I fear I wake
Too soon. I cannot sleep as the young men sleep,
Dream Eden dreams till the Lord bear them Eves
From their devoted beings.
Yet I fear I wake
Too late, the Word of Light already risen
From my garden always the same again.
Indeed, I know at last this hour between,
Neither of dreams nor of daylight breaking;
This hour I recognize, it is familiar waking —
Too soon, unless you be at last
My flesh not mine, another life beside me —
Too late,
Unless my private dark be gone, and you sent
Like light from the Lord, and the Lord meant
Always that you should be beside me.

PIONEER AND HIS CHILDREN

OLD Lot, tame hawk on a whitened rock,
Chuckles again with wine, shifts from claw to claw
Stirred to remember
The praries of his wide-flying youth,
Trekking with Abraham. Hilarious traffic,
The bright Sodom casinos of those days!
And him the strangers warned to travel at daybreak
On the strong errands of God, when he fled
The streets dark in the dawn of destruction; his are
Now, secret rejoicings which they don't remember,
Which the women cannot remember, though they peer
With distant birds' eyes, watching the wine work;
Though they cling here, alone together.
But as they ignore
The gusty days, he will ignore in triumph
The shaky clapboards of old age, forget
The spattered hill-perch which they share with him,
And so forget
Their frugal bodies, jealous to collect
The absent-minded drops of his old man's vigor
Which he will hardly miss any more
Alone with them in the dry present air.

FRANCIS FERGUSSON

THE ROOM

FINALLY Jonathan thought of the room. In the empty totality of a long life he had seen much of men and learned of their manners, and lived in many of their cities and indulged in some of their fancies. And now he was old enough to be tired, and he was tired.

Thus he came to think of the room in his father's house. He was an old man and the world a changed place, and of all the things in a changed world only the room would be the same.

It wasn't an especially fine room. It was a very plain room and yet a very disordered room, and it wasn't large. The furniture was old but it wasn't good old furniture, and the upholstery smelled of dust and damp smoke. The rugs were worn thin to hardness and in places the sun had faded them. Not that the room was a particularly sunny room. It wasn't, and in the winter it was draughty. Most old men wouldn't have liked it, it wasn't exactly an old man's room. It was a room in which one grew up to be a man. It was a boy's room and a young man's room, a room to leave when the world suddenly comes to mean more in size than the room and

when there is conjecture as to what is beyond the low lying horizon.

Jonathan had grown up in the room in his father's house. Each day he had watched the sun go away, sinking into the west as if it were weary of shining. He had wondered two things about it. First he had wondered whether it would be there the next day to set. Then he wondered where it went when it was night outside and the wind blew ash grey clouds across the moon and it was very dark in the room. And of the two questions the first was apparent and the answer positive, and it was a boy's answer; and the second was vexing and unanswered, and it was a man's question. It demanded a man's ways, and Jonathan had left the room and now it was forty years since he had been back.

Perhaps, he reflected now that he was an old man and weary of seeking, he might have learned from books what becomes of the sun when it has set. He might have stayed in the room all the days of his life and learned more of the way of the sun, of the way of men, than he did by following the path of the sun and by living with men. For in every place, in every posture of his thinking he had encountered a sinking sun, and he had left with no more understanding than he had come with. Each day he was made wretched by his mortification, doubly so because he knew that he should probably find the next day but the beginning of a fullness of mortification that would engulf him for the rest of his days. And his wretchedness exposed him to all manner of doubtings and to a great number of inquietudes, and he was an old man while he still was a young man and now that he was an old man in years he was a weary old man. But now he saw beyond the blinding obscuration that comes of trying to see too brilliant, far-distant objects and he saw himself in his last aloneness. It was a dull perception after his hopes for perceiving, but it was a first real perception and Jonathan had come to wish to perceive no more than that. He was an old

man of an age to die and he put aside all desire to see more. No longer could he care why the sun set and where it went after setting. The first answer that was a true answer when he was a boy was still a valid answer, and he now came to accept that as an only answer. And men and their ways and their cities and their fancies no longer intrigued him; nor did each generation of men as they tried to change the face of the earth as thoroughly as the nervous tides each day changed the face of the harbor floor. This was vanity, the greatest of all it appeared to Jonathan, and he no longer could condone it in himself, in other men, nor even in the tides.

ii

Because he knew how near to dying he was he knew that he must go back. To the room; to where he was born, to die. He knew that he was due to die when he had looked out of his bedroom window on the city park below. He had seen children playing there and he had watched them laughing, and then he had seen their soft little smiles turn to hard grownup grimaces. He knew too he was to die when he talked to people and he ceased to see their mouths as mouths but as openings hollowed out by their words, and their ears came to seem not ears but holes bored in the sides of their heads by his words. He knew he was soon to die, and he knew that where he was was no place for him to die.

It was no place because now he felt alien. He had never felt at home, but he had never felt so thoroughly alien He looked upon familiar things and he looked with no cognition. The streets suddenly became like the ruled pages of a ledger; the park, with its old men who sat day and day upon the benches and its children that played in and about the trees, now all appeared but as valiant little unclean strokes set down by a second-rate watercolorist. All that he had heard before on the streets from people passing, true laughter and feigned laughter, soft voices and strident voices, all be-

came no more than noise to him; and people became incomparably silent to him. But unlike a deaf man he was not blessed with quiet, but bedeviled by noise. And in his alienation all of his days thenceforth were a wearying that came of a wishing for a death that would come with the next day and all his nights he went to bed wishing he might stay abed and sleep all of the days and all of the nights to come and that he might stay there until it was time to get up and dress to die.

When he came to know in his own mind that he was soon to die he knew at once that there was but one place for him to die. He knew that the room was for him, an old man in a changed world, the only suitable place. There dying would be possible. There it would be proper. Its propriety influenced him a great deal. He felt there was a proper place for a man to die. For an old man there was but one place. With a young man it didn't much matter. A young man just died and it didn't matter where. With an old man it was different. By all that was of a rightness it was right for an old man to die surrounded by his progeny. Like Jacob. That was as it should be. But for Jonathan that was impossible, denied him. And it really had never bothered him. Not until he realized it was of a time to die. Then he cared though that he had no children and children's children to watch him die and say amen and bless his soul, oh Father. Then he cared a desperate care because caring was beyond hope.

And he was distressed, and he called upon his Savior.

But he could hear no answer that he could hear, no Voice in answer. And he was worried. He was worried to contrition because he could not abide the thought of dying with no one to intercede for him. He could not die out of his aloneness as he had lived in his aloneness.

And he called upon his Savior again.

— Sweet Jesus, bless me and present me in all my mortal imperfections to him thy perfect Father.

But Jonathan remembered what a theologian, a man of God with a voice like an actor's, had said. He had said that in order to achieve the kingdom of glory the Son must be petitioned, a mortal must plead with the Son to ask Grace of the Father. The living asking life for the dead. Otherwise we were faced with a Nothingness of Being, and even in death as in life there would be frustration. And Jonathan was sad to sickness, unsettled and cast down because the first of Divine ministrations, the last of human balms were both denied him. Death like that would not be death; death that way would be oblivion. And he knew no man who loved him well enough to beseech the Grace of Him for him. Truly the preacher with the fine diction like sluice water would call in the church upon the Son, even upon God, to accept his soul. But Jonathan felt that the finely uttered words would reach up into the nave of the church either to stick upon the ceiling or to fall to the floor like so many dried leaves. He could not quite see how one so all wise as He could mistake a learned plea from a real plea. He had no faith in the man of God, only in God. And he was consumed with fear and he was afraid of dying.

His fear was a cold fear. Not that he hadn't thought of death before. But never before had he seen the possibilities of death, of dying that was Death and dying that was a Beginning. Before his thoughts of death had been of the fear that comes with deep fretful night and is dispelled by the coming of the morning light. One died and that was death; the place, the manner were no causes for contrition, the Possibilities of no possible concern. Now though he felt an ache of the spirit and it engulfed his mind, and the mind could no longer formulate a logic, nor the body deny an ache greater than its own. There was no solvent strong enough to banish his fear, and the prospect of death came to importune him in all his hours. His waking hours became hours in which to lie down and his sleeping hours became hours in which to walk about. Lying down, by day by night, now seemed to

him a mere posturing for a final lying down, preparation for an irremediable malady.

The night that Jonathan came to fear death he lay awake. All night. He lay awake and he looked out of his eyes and he tried to see. And all he saw was darkness, quiet impenetrable. He couldn't sleep. Then he knew what death would be like without the blessing of man, the intercession of his Christ and ultimate acceptance by God. It would be a bitter death, this death like lying in the dark interminably. He cried softly, and gradually his eyes became red under his white lids. He cried hot moist tears of repentance and self-abnegation until his eyes were red entirely, and then he felt clean inside like the bed of a mountain stream. Then he fell into a half drowse, a luxurious state that was neither sleep nor awakeness.

He heard his father's voice, the clear incisive tones that he had resented as a boy. Jonathan was back in his childhood.

— You will be quiet, his father was saying. Three to five is our study hour and you must be quiet.

Then he went into the library. and the boy was left alone in the room. to be quiet for two hours. it was difficult to be quiet for two hours. especially when it was spring outside. it was more difficult when it was spring outside. in the winter one could be glad of a fire. you sat close to it and read and snatched chestnuts from out the grate. but in the spring the streams from the hills bolted through the meadows as fast as the blood coursed through one's veins. there were mayflowers to be found, hawthorn to be watched for and pussywillows to cut. there was so much to be done that had to be done in the spring that study seemed an imposition beyond comprehension or reason. even on days like this. when it is spring outside and it's raining soft sadly as it does in spring. and moreover the spring rain will soon stop. spring rain never lasts long. after the rain there will be turbulent puddles in the road. the spring wind will come in little gusts like the bubbles in a pancake batter frying. the puddles will be black and they will be unchartered and little wavelets will skim along the top of the

water. and now and then a swallow will dip down and fly low over the water and it will all seem like a vast ocean. after the spring rain is over and there are puddles in the road monitors and merrimacs will do fierce battle. if one can find a rebel-jonny to captain the southern boat. yankee boys are reluctant. but occasionally a pack peddler happens along who doesn't mind taking the rebels' side. jonathan wouldn't mind. except that his father was away to war and he felt he should fight by his father's side. but his mother had a cousin from virginia and jonathan liked him. he smoked sweet smelling cigars that made you half dizzy when you took a single drag. it was a bother to always have to wait for a pack peddler to play monitor and merrimac. even when you expect yussel. he doesn't mind being rebel. he rather enjoys it. and when he wins he laughs his quiet jewish laugh. and when he loses he laughs his quiet jewish laugh. of all the rebel adversaries jonathan likes yussel best. despite his frequent victories.

then there's the shed. to sit under the rafters after the rain is over and listen to the uneven drip on the roof. that's fun. counting to ten and if you say ten at the same time that you hear a drop of rain on the roof you get your wish. and after that going out into the twilight light that is neither night nor day. trout will be feeding and they will zoom to the surface and then descend lazily like heat lightning on a distant horizon. and when there is a large one to see the temptation to move to see it better is too great. the fish will feel your movement and it will dive with immeasurable speed down to the bottom of the night blue pool. a trout at the bottom of the pool and the semi-darkness and walking home alone is saddening. like listening to a lone flute.

and to be indoors when it is spring outside. the horsehair upholstery rubbing against your neck and the air that is heavy and lapidescent. it is wrathing to be a boy and to be indoors when it is spring outside. the boy goes to the windows. they are steamed on the inside. jonathan rubs his palm over the unpleasant wetness and looks out. the village is long and grey like vapor on a verdant

valley. in the garden the weeds strain at their roots. it is spring but somehow it is troublesome like autumn. it is spring outside and yet from the room the outside appears not springlike at all. there is nothing to do but study. ENUNCIATION *is the heading on the page. the lesson for the day.* PAGE ELEVEN. 4. A as in FAT. 5. A as in WASH. 6. A as in RARE. *then there is a note.* There are two extremes of error to be avoided in the following words, — that of a too flat, and divided into two sounds; thus māyŭn for măn, — and that of a too broad; thus pauss for păss. EXERCISE: bàt càt màt hàt màt pát sàt, rat vat blab sack lad staff, had mall tan dram scrap, pass have has glass class mass grass, asp grasp clasp rast past fast, lance glance trance, France chant branch crash slant, man can gather alas advance.

outside it drizzles gently again. on the meadows and in the forest where there are mayflowers. in the garden where the hawthorn is. on the roads where the frothy puddles now are grey. soft even grey as the quiet even rain begins to fall. the rain falls on the roof of the shed. out there where one counts to ten. onetwothreefourfivesixseveneightnineten. over and over. and if you say ten as a raindrop falls you get your wish. counting to ten over and over and most of the time not getting your wish. but only once is it necessary. only once need you get your wish to negate all the failures.

iii

When he awakened late the next morning Jonathan remembered the room. He came to see its possibilities now that he was an old man and lonely. And the remembrance softened his acute pain and brought his hopes higher. He might again sit in the room. He was weary and sitting would be good. He might sit in the room and wait for death like waiting for the rain to drop on the shed roof. Only in this there would be no uncertainty. He need not even wish it, although he did, death would come to him. And in the room

he would not be alone. In the room surely there would remain enough of a past love, an abundance of love of fathers for generations of sons, enough would remain for them to raise their wordless voices in supplication to Him. Such love must transcend time, must be acceptable to His Son. Such voices could be heard, so true a plea would not be denied. And although Jonathan had no faith in a living petitioner he had faith in dead ones, and he was hopeful again because he cared again, was cared for, and he no more was afraid of death. In the room, that was the place for him to die; there voices would utter the silent Word, and dying would not be death that was oblivion.

And in being reconciled to death Jonathan was at last reconciled to his father. Now he understood that theirs had been two separate lives that came from the same root. Now he understood what his father had meant when he had come back in the spring from victory with General Grant. He had said that it was a perverse victory, bitter won, and that men should think only of planting in the wet soil. Jonathan had understood that. Planting was of a goodness. The pastor said so each spring, and in the fall there was a harvest. But too his father had said that his world, his and his son's, was a dead world and that all those born in it were born for death, that their world and their way of life had been killed off by the victorious. And that had puzzled Jonathan. He was alive, it was spring and there was much to be alive for. The fields were becoming alive, one felt again the sharpness of the pain of a new birth. Spring was good and victory had come to the North. On the village green the returned soldiers were drawn up in ranks thinned by victory yet strangely enlarged. Their band played. Brave jaunty songs they were to Jonathan, not sad songs of victory as they were to his father. The snare drums announced the rhythm of victory, the horns proclaimed it and embroidered a tune upon it; and Jonathan was filled with a feeling of exaltation of

having had his generation purged by the victory. That the victory had killed off his generation, as his father said, was a mad wild thought that was born in the heat and horror of battle.

Now though that he was an old man and he had lived through his life and found it wanting Jonathan knew why his father had planted in the wet soil and read Shakespeare and spoke little and loved his family a great deal. Now he felt one with his father. The root was the same and it was a bitter root, a cut off root. And now only could his father understand his last request.

That was why Jonathan had to die in the room. His father's words were right words, and no more could he live than could he die in a world from which he was so alienated. Now he realized that he should have lived all his days in the room, in the way of his father; and now that he had but a few days to live in the room he saw that the grace of a way of life, the grace of a way that he was born into was gone because he had deserted it when its need for preservation was greatest. And although he had long since ceased to direct his course to any specific ideal, and he had long since confined his existence that owed the next day's existence to the day preceding, still he had when he thought of the room come to see that his father's way and his father's father's way was the right way of life for him. Gradually it was forced upon him without any formal acknowledgment and he saw that there was a sleevelessness in his past mode of living, a condition of day to dayness that waited only upon the first welcome last day. He finally saw it as a wrongness. But in the room he might briefly live the life that he had denied himself. In the room he might sit out his few remaining days and there live tenscore days in each of his days. It would be a senile self deception such furious living, like the Indian summer reblossoming that is killed off by the first frost. But Jonathan knew it, and it was sufficient this deception.

To each object in the room he would confess a sin. To each aspect of the landscape he would confide a past error. He would tell of misgivings, for bad deeds done and good deeds not attempted: Of kindnesses not done and kindnesses not thought of. Of obstinacy when obstinacy was not needed, and weakness when firmness was demanded. Of proclamations of faith when impiety had preceded it. Of incognitancy when thought was necessary, and of awareness when stupidity would have been of a greater kindness. Of combativeness when submission was more of a rightness. Of saneness when insanity was more in wisdom, and of drunkenness when sobriety was more proper and sobriety when drunkenness would have been more of a fitness.

Then would be gone the agony of a remembrance. And all day and each day he might sit in the room quietly contemplating the wallpaper with the extravagant roses, the flowers each day more brief fading, of less color and more fugitive. There he might sit each day waiting all of his days for the day when there is no more of days, of thinking or of travail.

iv

Jonathan wrote to his mother's cousin who lived in his father's house. And he waited with impatience as he wondered about the welcome his boyhood New England would have for him. It would be autumn when he arrived, mid-autumn with its ill-grudging reluctance to either cease being summer or begin being winter. The seasons will seem to be hanging over the countryside; the gentle droning sadness of late summer and the snarling noisomeness of early winter will meet to negate each other, and for days there will be no sense of the progress of the seasons. And one half the landscape will appear in strange contradiction to the other half. The foliage will be partly of an over-red and over-yellowness and partly of a too near to seerness; draped over the branches of the elms it will appear at times like an affectation of summer, at

others like the shameful ashamedness of an old maid afraid to look upon herself in her nakedness. The birds will swoop to earth in indecision, shriek and then depart southwards. Fruit trees will sag heavy with fruit, dipping towards the ground in their anxiety for the relief that will come to them with the harvest. The ashen brown hillsides will be bare save for the bundled corn stalks standing huddled together like the people at Pompeii overtaken by death. The pasture fields will lie fallow, neatly plowed and ready for restful winter. Over it all a summer-like sun will shed its warmth and light, but the landscape will know better than to be beguiled and silently and without show it will strip itself so as to be in readiness for sleek winter.

The welcome that he contemplated Jonathan concluded could only be the doubtful and diffident welcome of the grave. Still it would be of an adequacy. Any welcome would be of an adequacy when one's palate is dulled to taste and one's feet tired to lameness. It would be adequate and joyful. Soon he would eat of food and his palate would respond to the sharpness of the mustard seed and the pungency of the apple, for he would taste out of a memory of foods tasted long years before when he was a boy and in the room. And now soon he would sit down in the room and he would forget how tired to lameness his feet really were.

In the half undressedness of the landscape Jonathan knew he should once more feel the mild gaunt hautiness that was of New England. But in the grace of mid-autumn there would be a softening and a relenting; tree and leaf, earth and sky, hill and pond all would fuse in the vagueness of an autumnal accord and at last Jonathan would sit in the room relieved of all desire to add up the disparate items that go to make up the sum.

* * *

It was of a finality for Jonathan to have thought of the room. And when a letter came to say that his father's house had been torn down to make way for a filling station Jonathan puzzled over the typed sheet with the confusion of despair and dullness. For he saw that he was soon to die with no living man, no voice of loving dead to exhort and to penetrate to Christ the Son so that He might persuade His Father to accept him. And even his great pain could not expiate the vacuity of spirit that took the place of the hope that he had held for a last peace, and he lay abed ill in body and in spirit. All day the troubling figuration on the rug came up from the floor to bother him and all night the darkness was too pressing a void to sleep in. And when he could stand it no longer he got up and dressed himself and started for the house of the man of God. But he died before he reached it.

And it was night when they lifted him up. Above him the sky was in shambles, the moon, the stars, the clouds scattered by the wind, the night disordered.

And in the burial ground when they buried him the man of God said his voice would be heard; and the prayer went on as if intoned by itself.

CHARLES FLATO

LENT IN 16° N.

ICE preserves the conscience too
and constant flakes
redeem the Redeemer:
fly away then on the ivory sled
to Eskimo women,
play bone cards under smoking lamps,
drink whale oil,
know: a head is a head, all flesh
is veined and equally valved,
sleep out the stupor in a bed of snow
with the Colt audibly running
in the snowveldts of sky.

ay, the pain, the nightmare:
should the Frigate, the silk-bannered,
the Redeemer's own,
boarded with silver, washed with contrition
come into bay,
halt its tremulous sails,
should a boat be lowered for You,
a boat gliding on blue hoarfrost,
coming for You.

ay who could tell the Redeemer of the fauna
that grows on the bone cards,
can you come dragging an eskimo woman and show
how late the Redeemer is coming.

out of the bay,
pulls back to ice-seas,
back to the phocas
and the womenless auks,
back to his equinox,
out of the bay,

ay, and should you leap after the boat
the little sailor, who seemed so gentle,
all cut out of paper, with a bonnet of fur,
will suddenly whip out a flame-knout
and wheek across the eskimo sky —
the firtrees would blister —
the little sailor who seemed so gentle.
Lent in exile:
play cards under smoky lamps,
see the patience
of eskimo spinners.

THOMAS OREAN

CHRISTIAN PERSONALITY

NO IDEAS are more familiar to the modern mind than are those of individuality and personality. Indeed, we may ask whether the need of reacting against evils of quantity production does not incline us at times to exaggerate its importance. It always happens that whenever the collective assumes a specifically religious value, as though it were enough to eliminate the individual in order to obtain the divine, the individual and the personal appropriate for themselves the value of sanctity and appear to be the only possible foundation of all religion. It seems as though man is incapable of stating an antinomy without worshipping its terms.

Such a condition is not absolutely necessary. It is possible, perhaps, to imagine a philosophy which recognizes the collective in its proper place, without feeling obliged to sacrifice either individuals to it, or it to individuals. Even under such circumstances, emphasis could be placed on one of the two terms and there could be various judgments of value passed by philosophers; but a certain common ground would continue to remain open, the exchange of ideas would still be possible and a true philosophical progress could thus be realized. Such was the relation that existed between Greek and medieval speculation: because they had never denied the reality of the individual, the Greeks made possible the recognition of the eminent value of the person by Christianity. Not only have they not hindered such a recognition, or simply retarded it, but they have also furthered its progress. It is impossible to deny, without misreading the most evident historical facts, that the Cynics, the Stoics and, as Victor Brochard could eloquently remind us, the Epicureans themselves knew how to direct the development of the interior life

to a very high point of perfection. The names of Epictetus and Seneca are sufficient and make all further explanations unnecessary; and it is also well known that the middle ages did not see anything to prevent considering them as the precursors of Christianity, sometimes even as saints. Even in this problem, therefore, we cannot doubt that the strong presentiment of the philosophical truth was not far in advance of its open recognition and technical justification; but the question is simply to know whether Christianity has not hastened the maturity of this truth and, in giving it full consciousness of its absolute necessity, has not invited it to a speculative effort that still remained for its justification. Now on this particular point there was still much to be done. Neither the Epicureans nor the Stoics had transcended the moral level to rise to a metaphysic of personality, from which undertaking indeed there was nothing to prevent them. Neither Plato nor Aristotle, who held the metaphysical principles of this justification, had a high enough estimate of the value of the individual as such to dream of such a justification.

In a doctrine like that of Plato it is not Socrates, whom he has so often celebrated, but Man that is important. Socrates is important only because he is a remarkable successful participation, though an accidental one none the less, of the being of an idea. The idea of Man is eternal, immutable, necessary. In common with all other individuals, Socrates is only a temporary and accidental being; he participates in the unreality of his matter in which is reflected the permanence of the Idea, and his momentary being moves forward with the flow of becoming. Without doubt, some individuals are better than others, but this does not come about through some unique and inseparable characteristic of their very personality; it is only because they participate more or less completely in a common reality, the ideal type of humanity, which, one and the same for all men, is alone the truly real.

In the system of Aristotle, the unreality and accidental character of the individual are equally evident. Of course, the world of Aristotle is different from that of Plato, for the Ideas, far from constituting the true reality, are refused all independent existence. The universal, therefore, is far from being nothing in the philosophy of Aristotle, but it does not enjoy the privilege of a substance, for particular beings alone can properly be said to exist. Consequently, it is only just to say that the philosophy of Aristotle places much more emphasis on the reality of individuals than does that of Plato. Nevertheless, in one philosophy as well as in the other, it is the universal that is important. Although the only real substances that he recognizes are men, that is to say, the specific form of humanity individualized by matter. Aristotle considers the multiplicity of individuals as being only a substitute for the unity of the species. Failing a Humanity that cannot exist apart, nature is content with its piecemeal product, man. Each one of us is born, lives a short time and disappears forever without leaving any traces behind him. But, of what consequence is that, when other men are born, who will live, die and be replaced by still others? The individuals pass, but the species endures, and this is so true that in the last analysis the individual who subsists and passes has for his purpose only to assure the permanence of that which does not subsist, but which does not pass away.

To what extent this fragility and depreciation of the individual were to shock the Christian sentiment of the permanent value of human persons can be seen quite easily by examining the earliest testimony of the Christian tradition. Though it is difficult to choose, I prefer to turn to the testimony of one of the most unjustly forgotten of men, Athenagoras, whose treatise *On the Resurrection of the Dead* is the first known attempt to justify rationally the great hope of Christianity. After having shown that the resurrection of the human bodies that have been destroyed by death is a work

that is neither impossible for God, nor unworthy of Him, the apologist undertakes to prove that there are positive reasons for admitting that such a fact will come to pass.

The first of these is taken from the final cause for which man was created. God has given us existence only in order that He might make us participate in a life of wisdom which consists in the contemplation of His perfection and the beauty of His creation. Since this contemplation cannot be perfect in this world, the cause of man's birth is a guarantee of his perpetual existence, which in turn is a guarantee of his resurrection, necessary to his subsistence. This is the fundamental principle on which the whole doctrine rests, and which, as we shall see later on, will give birth to an important epistemological consequence, the primacy of contemplation. For the time being, let us be content with an analysis of its implications in so far as the nature of man is concerned.

Had God created souls, their purpose would have been that which has just been defined; but He has created men, and this is so true that in reality there is, properly speaking, no end for the soul, but only for man. Whence, in order that the end of man may be identical with that of the soul, it is necessary that the human body be called upon to participate in it: "If thought and reason have been given to men in order that they may know the things that reason apprehends, and not only their substance, but also the goodness, the wisdom and the justice of Him who has given it to them, it is necessary that the causes for which rational knowledge was granted to them should remain the same, and that the power to judge which is inseparable from them should subsist. Now, it will not be able to subsist if the nature which has received it and in which it resides does not subsist. *But it is man and not the soul by itself that has received thought and reason.* It is necessary therefore that man, composed of soul and body, should subsist forever, and he cannot subsist unless there be a resurrection."

When we weigh these expressions of Athenagoras, the pervasiveness of the influence exercised by revelation on philosophical thought becomes very clear. Created by man as a distinct individuality, conserved in the being which he has received from God by an act of continued creation, man henceforth is the character in a drama affecting his very destiny. Since to exist did not depend upon us, so not to exist in the future does not depend upon us. The divine decree has condemned us to be. Established in existence by creation, reëstablished by the redemption, and at what price! We have no choice other than between sorrow and beatitude, both equally eternal. There is nothing more persevering than an individuality of this kind, foreseen, desired, chosen by God and as indestructible as the divine decree itself which brought it into being; but there is also nothing more foreign to the philosophy of Plato as well as to that of Aristotle. On this point also, just as soon as it sought to find a full rational justification for its hope, Christian thought found that it was forced to be original.

Two different ways by which to assure the subsistence of the individual were open to the thinkers of the middle ages. Abandoning quite deliberately a chronological order, I shall consider first of all that way which seems to be the easiest, and in order to show once more how Christian philosophy prolonged and surpassed Greek philosophy, I shall take from one of the best modern interpreters of Aristotle certain considerations that will show that the problem of individuality was already a problem of pure philosophy many centuries before it became a Christian problem.

According to the principles of Aristotle, an individual is a concrete being, composed of a form that is analogous in all the individuals of the same species, and of a matter that individualizes it. If we consider, for example, the instance of men, none of them could be considered different from the others in so far as he is a man; all of them are men in the same

degree and in the same way. Briefly, precisely because it is *specific*, the form is of the same nature in all the individuals of the same species. The same is not the case with matter which individualizes them. The same quantity of matter exists only once in itself, and it could not be repeated because it belongs to the nature of the parts of extension to exist one outside the other, to have *partes extra partes;* and this is so true that every form which is united to one portion of matter becomes distinct from every other form united to another portion of matter in virtue of the very division of the matter to which it is united.

It is at this point, as it has been well remarked, that the difficulties begin. It would be impossible to consider prime matter as the principle of individuation, because matter which is only matter is pure potentiality, absolute indetermination, so that the same specific form in being united to that which is of itself completely indeterminate, would remain as indistinct after its union with this matter as it was before. Another position, therefore, will be assumed and, in order to avoid this difficulty, it will be said that the form is individualized in being united to a matter already qualified, for example, determined in such a way by extension. Nothing is better than this, except that in this case matter becomes the principle of individuation only because it is itself rendered individuating by a form. In other words, if all difference is in the last analysis a formal difference, it is difficult to see how matter could play the rôle of the principle of individuation. We may add to this that the difficulty becomes more serious the more the Aristotelianism under consideration appears to be rigorously consistent. If we admit the unity of form in the composite, it is quite necessary that the matter should derive from the form even that quantity and impenetrability which are thought to individualize it. In such a position, and every one knows that that is the position of Thomism, should we not be reduced to saying that it is the

form which individualizes itself thanks to the quantity with which it endows matter? That would seem to be a costly and rather useless alternative that could easily be avoided by the frank admission that it is in the soul itself that we must place the principle of individuation.

Meantime, serious difficulties in the doctrine of Aristotle, and above all in the very spirit of the doctrine would stand in the way of such an admission. His description of a humanity whose individuals are distinguished from one another only by accidental differences is in full accord with his firm conviction that the individuals exist only for the good of the species and that in the last analysis the individuals, as such, are not important. But there is more than this, for we cannot succeed in assigning to them some importance as individuals without destroying the unity of the species itself. If we introduce an individual difference in the form of each individual, we shall make of it a species that cannot be reduced to any other. Socrates would be as different from Callias as Socrates and Callias now are from an animal or from a tree. In a word, we shall destroy the unity of the species in order to preserve in a better way the originality of the individual, without realizing that the first condition necessary for the existence of men is the existence of a humanity.

In a Christian thinker, the desire to assure the subsistence and originality of the individual is such that Duns Scotus did not hesitate to expose himself to this difficulty. According to him, every human form, precisely as form, is marked by an individual character that distinguishes it from all the others. In an isolated text, Aristotle himself seems to have said something of the kind. "The causes and the elements of different individuals are different: your matter, form and moving cause being different from mine." It seems to be clear that in expressing himself in this way Aristotle did not alter in any way the principles of his doctrine, for if my form is different from yours, it is probably because a different mat-

ter from yours individualizes it. Nevertheless, this was enough to encourage Duns Scotus to follow his own way and to seek in the form, as form, the ultimate principle of individuation.

If the form of a man, says Duns Scotus, is not individual by itself, since matter, as such, possesses no characteristics of individuality, there will be no individual human beings whatever. Now, there are such beings. It is necessary, therefore, that the form itself of the individual be the principle of its individuation. Of course, it could not be a question of multiplying uselessly the number of forms in a given individual, because that could not be done without ruining its unity; but it is not necessary to add a form to every form in order to individualize it. No one doubts that from a certain point of view God is an individual, and, nevertheless, it would be impossible to attribute His individuality either to matter or to a supplementary form which should individualize Him. The angels are individuals, and, nevertheless, they are immaterial and simple in their form. Why would not the same thing hold in the case of man? All that we are required to admit is that, taken in itself and in its ultimate reality, the soul is individual and the cause of individuality. Of itself, and by that which gives it its proper definition, it is not only *a* soul, but *this* soul, and it is its essential individuality which renders man in his entirety, with the matter of his body included, individual.

The Scotist solution to the problem was not without certain evident advantages. It was an economical solution in the sense that it was easily perceived, and transformed the Greek man into the Christian man with the least possible number of additional hypotheses. Nevertheless, whatever may have been the ability of a medieval philosopher to find confirmation of his ideas in the texts of Aristotle, it was difficult to find very much in order to rest a doctrine such as this on his authority. Besides, mindful of the difficulty of maintaining in

his doctrine the unity of the human species, Duns Scotus was destined to modify in a profound way the very notion of unity in order to reconcile the unity of the species with that of the individual. In this way, Scotism is faced in the end by as many complications as it avoided, and it was perhaps the presentiment of these latent difficulties which turned St. Thomas away from this interpretation, however tempting it may have been at first sight.

There is no difference, at first glance, between the Thomistic answer and the Aristotelian answer to the problem under discussion. Their principles are the same and their conclusions are formulated in identical terms. The formal distinction is that which brings it about that one species is distinguished from another; the material distinction is that which brings it about that one individual is distinguished from another. Now, since matter is subordinated to form as is potency to act, it is necessary that the material distinction should exist for the good of the formal distinction, which amounts to saying that individuals exist for the good of the species. When the species can be realized in a single individual, as is the case with the pure Intelligences, there is no occasion to divide it into a plurality of individuals numerically distinct. That is why, in the system of St. Thomas, every angel is a complete species. Where the specific form cannot subsist by itself in its fullness, as is the case with man, it endures and is perpetuated by the generation and the corruption of a series of individuals that are numerically distinct and whom matter individualizes. It would seem impossible to think of an agreement between two philosophies that is more complete; or perhaps we ought to say that they are one philosophy only and that there is only a numerical distinction between that of Aristotle and that of St. Thomas Aquinas. On the other hand, even on a little reflection on the original character of the Thomistic anthropology, it will seem difficult to believe that the substantiality of the soul, so

strongly accented in this doctrine, should not have any directive influence on the problem of individuality. What, therefore, is an individual according to St. Thomas Aquinas?

An individual is a being divided from all the other beings and itself not divisible into other beings. In this it is very different from a species, for, if it is true that a species is formally distinct from every other species, nevertheless, it can be divided into a plurality of distinct individuals without losing its nature. Humanity exists in every man and indeed it is because there are men that a human species exists. A man on the contrary, is distinct from every other man and he could not be divided into a multiplicity without being destroyed. That is why he is called an *individual.*

If we relate this definition to our metaphysical analysis of the being of man, we shall see that in spite of an apparent contradiction, they confirm one another. For it is true to say at the same time both that man is not a simple substance and that nevertheless he is indivisible. It is not the soul which is man, nor the body, but the composite of the two. Now, since the matter which is one of its substantial parts is incommunicable because of extension, this composite is by definition an example unique in itself, original therefore and irreducible to any other. What may provoke us in such a conception of the individual is the idea that that which makes each one of us to be his own distinct self, that which gives to our personality that proper character which we are pleased to recognize in each one of us and which we judge to be so valuable is due, in this theory, not to the spiritual element of our nature but to the accidental fact that the portion of matter of which our body has been made is not the same as that of which has been made the body of our neighbor. That appears to be neither human nor Christian. While this is quite true, it is not any longer the question under discussion. The philosophical reflection of medieval thinkers has pushed the analysis of problems much farther than we commonly

do today. The object which the Thomistic doctrine of individuation seeks to explain is individuation itself and nothing more. From the fact that there would be no individuals if there were no human bodies, it does not follow in the least that it is the body which confers upon the individual his dignity nor even which defines his originality. Just as soon as we remember that there is no concrete substance without matter, but that the substantiality of the human composite is that which the form communicates to its matter, the question appears immediately in an entirely new light.

From this point on, in fact, it is clear that even in preserving the Aristotelian elements of the problem, we shall not solve it in exactly the same way as Aristotle. What, in reality, is the principle? It is that the form of man cannot subsist as an individual subject; but the quality of substance, nevertheless, belongs to the individual subject in virtue of its form, for it is the form which gives to matter its real being and in this way permits the individual to subsist. Hence it follows that the being of the matter and the being of the composite are none other than the being of their form; and, conversely, that the being of the form is the being of the entire composite. There is nothing more natural than this since it is the form which gives the being, and that is why indeed I said in the last lecture that it is absurd to imagine that the destruction of the body should result in the destruction of the soul, for it is the soul which gives being to the body and not the body to the soul. We must therefore strictly maintain the principle of the non-individuality of the soul as such, for it would be absurd to imagine two forms of such a nature which would be numerically distinct as forms; indeed they are not distinct in so far as they are capable of being joined to different bodies, for the metaphysical difficulty would remain the same. At the same time we must observe all the truth contained in the principle of Aristotle, and one which he himself was unable to use to advantage because he did not experience the

Christian desire to base the unity of the individual on the soul.

This truth appears with perfect clarity only after we have distinguished in the light of the foregoing analyses the notion of individuality from that of individuation. The principle of individuation is matter; hence, it is matter which causes individuality; but it is not in its matter that the individuality of the individual consists. On the contrary, it is not individual, that is, undivided in itself and divided from everything else, except because it is a concrete substance taken as a whole. In this way, the individuating matter is such only in virtue of its unity with the being of the whole substance; and, since the being of the substance is that of the form, it follows necessarily that individuality is a property of the form as well as of the matter. It belongs even more to the form than to the matter, since, like the matter, the form participates in the individuality of the substance, and since, in addition, it is the form and not the matter which in this substance is the source of the substantiality. We may express the same idea in a different way by saying that it is the matter which individualizes the form, but that, once individualized, it is the form which is individual. Briefly, the soul is an individual form, although the reason for this is not that it is a form; and it is the subsistence of this individual form which, by conferring upon the matter its proper existence, permits the individual to subsist. It is impossible, furthermore, to understand fully in what this individuality of the soul consists without rising from the level of individuality to that of personality.

All human persons are first of all individuals, but they are much more than that, for we do not speak of a person, nor indeed do we speak of a famous character, except when the individual substance under consideration possesses in itself a certain dignity. Animals are individuals, but they are not persons. The significance of personality is much deeper than

this, for it is always in virtue of its highest dignity that any being is called a person, and we find an indication that such is the case in the fact that when we wish to honor anyone we address him always by his highest title, casting aside all the other titles as unimportant. Now, if we seek to find the highest source of honor that man possesses, we discover that it is his reason, and this is so true that we must define the human person as "the individual substance of a rational being." This is the definition of Boethius, and there are few philosophers in the middle ages who did not find it satisfactory; for it could be attributed appropriately to the reality which was to be defined, and to that reality alone. We must, however, make the meaning of this definition precise and consider as well its consequences.

The distinction between the universal and the particular is common to all the classes of being. In a certain sense, indeed, it would apply also to accidents as well as to substances; but, since accidents are particular only because they belong to a particular substance, we must say that it is substances which are, in a real sense, the true particular beings. Considered in their concrete subsistence, substances are therefore individual. There are individuals, however, which are distinguished from the rest by a remarkable property, that of being the autonomous sources of spontaneous actions. Natural inorganic bodies undergo passively the influence of the laws of nature whose energies govern and move them without either their coöperation or reaction. Plants and animals are placed upon a higher level, especially the animals, because they react to exterior stimuli, but the nature of their reaction is determined by the actions to which they are subject, so that they also can be said to be acted upon rather than to act. The case of man is entirely different. Endowed with reason, capable of apprehending a multiplicity of different objects, he finds that he has possibilities of choice which are not at the command of other beings; and, as we shall see more fully in

what follows, his rationality is the very principle of his freedom. Man, therefore, is distinguished from the individuals of every other species by the fact that he is master of his acts, for, as distinguished from those beings which are acted upon by natural forces, man is himself the subject of his actions. To designate the proper individuality of a free being, we say that it is a person. In this way, the essence of personality merges with that of freedom. Furthermore, freedom depends on rationality, and since it is rationality itself on which is based the subsistence of the soul and of man, it is necessary to say that in us the principle of individuality becomes one with the principle of personality. The actuality of the rational soul, in communicating itself to the body, determines the existence of an individual that is a person; and this is so true that the individual soul possesses personality by definition.

With this idea we are led far beyond the speculations of Greek thought, Platonic or Aristotelian. For if the human soul is a substance and the principle of substantiality, that is because it is an intellect, that is, a being by definition immaterial and consequently incorruptible. As a result, St. Thomas in his turn can take up, as indeed he never tires of doing, the famous principle of Aristotle that the individual exists only for the good of the species. However, through a transposition that was thenceforth inevitable, the consequences which were turned to the benefit of the species in the system of Aristotle will be turned to the benefit of the individual in the system of the Christian philosopher. The aim of nature is much less the species than the incorruptible. If at times it is the good of the species that nature has in view rather than the good of the individuals, this takes place only in those instances where the individuals are corruptible and the species alone endures; but when this problem is referred to incorruptible substances, we find that it is not only the species which endures, but also the individuals. That is why in such a case the individuals themselves are included within

the fundamental intention of nature: *etiam ipsa individua sunt de principali intentione naturae.* Now, it is the soul which is the incorruptible part of man, and we must say therefore that the multiplication of individual human beings is a prime intention of nature, or rather, of the author of nature, who is the only creator of human souls: God.

In this way the individual being of the Christian, henceforth founded on the substantiality of the intellect and the immortality which it entails, acquires the dignity of a permanent, indestructible being, distinct from every other being in its very permanence and in the radical source of a rational activity whose exercise will decide the future destiny of this responsible being. It is necessary to point out that we are here at the source of the whole life of the spirit in its double activity, theoretical and practical, since it is in so far as rational, and therefore in so far as it is a person, that the individual can discern the true from the false, that is, can formulate a system of knowledge, and also discern good from evil, that is, formulate a system of ethics. The whole interior life of the Christian man finds its ultimate motivation in the progressive constitution, in the constant improvement and in the unfailing progress of this personality which will realize itself completely only in the future life. For it is indeed very true to say that what we call a person finds himself in existence because of the single fact that an intellect, the principle of free determinations, is united to a matter in order to constitute a rational substance. Kant himself, along with all the personalism which takes its inspiration from his doctrine, will do no more than inherit the Christian tradition, when he will see in personality the identity of a thinking substance, which remains the same under all the acts which it performs, and which is predestined to immortality by its very unity. But we must add that, considered from the standpoint of its constitutive principles, this person is still very far from complete perfection. At first sight, medieval philosophy has made

few efforts to relate the complete development of the interior life; and this is a fact which shows that its principles are still possessed of an inexhaustible fecundity. St. Thomas exalts personality above every other reality observable in nature; there is nothing which he considers superior in dignity to the essence of these beings that he defines as rational individuals: *singularia rationalis naturae*. How could it be otherwise, when with all the theologians of the Latin language St. Thomas extends the notion of personality to God himself in elaborating the doctrine of the divine persons? In fact, almost all that we know concerning the philosophy of personality is found among medieval thinkers in the questions which they devote to the theology of the Trinity. It is in the *De duabus naturis* of Boethius, that is to say, in a treatise on the two natures of Christ, that we meet the definition of person which will inspire the whole middle ages and which will have such a great influence on the development of ethics in modern times. It is in the question whether or not they have the right to apply the concept of person to God that St. Bonaventure and St. Thomas examine and develop the definition of Boethius. Finally, to return to our principal theme, how would it be possible for personality not to be the proper mark of being in its highest point of perfection, in a philosophy which is Christian and in which everything is suspended from the creative act of a personal God? For everything has been made by the Word and the Word is with God, and the Word is God, that is, precisely that being which is held to be personal because it is Being: "Ecce personalis distinctio: Exodi tertio, *ego sum, qui sum*." It is to the metaphysics of Exodus, therefore, that Christian personalism is related, just as were all the other questions: we are persons because we are the creations of a Person; we participate in the divine personality just as we participate in the divine perfection, being good; we participate in the creative omnipotence, being causes; we participate in the divine providence being

ourselves endowed with foresight, and being also, since we participate in His Being, ourselves beings. To be a person is to participate in one of the highest perfections of the divine being. That seems to be the end of the analysis. There is not a word in all of ethics on this question of which we ourselves say that it expresses the highest dignity of man and consequently of all nature. How are we to explain the fact that at the very moment of so important a discovery Christian thought seems to stop short and abandons further use of its success?

The difficulty is only apparent. It is true that the notion of person does not seem to play any part in medieval ethics, but we cannot conclude that it is absent unless we forget the very definition which Christian thinkers have given it: an individual of a rational nature. If, as we shall have to show later on, Christian ethics requires of man that he should live a life that is perfectly rational, there is nothing which it says of ethics that does not concern directly the history of personality. It is the person, as practical reason, who connects the train of human events; it is the person who, beginning with the capabilities of his essence still unrealized, continues to enrich himself ceaselessly with new forms of knowledge, moral habits or virtues, practical habits or arts, and who, carrying on as it were his own growth, gives expression to those human masterpieces — the scholar, the hero, the artist or the saint. These are enduring masterpieces, imperishable as the personality which they constitute, fashioned even in the substance of an immortal soul destined to recover its body in immortality. Of all the things that are admirable in nature, remarks the Greek poet, there is none which I know to be as admirable as man. From the time of Christianity it is not man only, but the human person of which we are to speak: *persona significat id quod est perfectissimum in tota natura*. In order to follow the development of this exalted being, it is thenceforth necessary to study the conditions of

his theoretical and practical activity, the acquisition of his knowledge and the exercise of his morality.

At the moment when this first series of lectures comes to an end, I feel more keenly than ever how inadequate it has been in comparison with the grandeur of the subject, and as it were how much it resembles an outline. Nevertheless, this outline of which I am the first critic, can, I think, be called upon in my defense. My intention has been to set forth, in so far as I am able, a small number of philosophical questions whose origin, according to the present state of our knowledge, seems to be religious and more particularly Judeo-Christian. If the fundamental point of the thesis which I am defending is true, it is possible to postpone provisionally a study of those elements which Christian philosophy has borrowed from Greek philosophy, with the certainty that every element of Hellenic or other origin which found place in the Christian synthesis entered therein only after undergoing an assimilation and consequently a transformation.

When the problem is so stated, it becomes immediately clear that we do not pretend to make of Christian philosophy a kind of creation *ex nihilo*, without profound relations to the past. The enumeration and classification of its Greek sources, that is, all that Christianity had to borrow and then assimilate, will never come to an end. Furthermore, one may ask quite legitimately whether there would ever have been a Christian philosophy, had Greek philosophy never existed? It is quite possible to imagine without any difficulty a Christianity reduced to the content of the Old and the New Testaments, possessed of as little speculation as had been Judaism, and possessed also of identically the same religious nature which it has preserved down to our day. Philosophy, even a Christian philosophy, never has been, is not and never will be a necessary part of a doctrine of salvation. Consequently, far from denying that Christian thought is deeply indebted to

Greek thought, it is only just to say that in Christian philosophy, it is Greek philosophy, that is to say, philosophy pure and simple, which continues. The only question that could be raised was that of knowing whether this philosophy had not undergone a change, whether its development had not received a new impulse, because it was continuing its existence under the Christian régime? It is to this question precisely that the notion of Christian philosophy seems to me to bear an answer, for we must keep in mind that if it is to Scripture that we owe the possession of a philosophy that is Christian, it is to the Greek tradition that Christianity owes the possession of a philosophy. A metaphysics of pure being without a Biblical revelation is impossible, but a metaphysics which was to take its origin from this revelation is likewise impossible without Greek philosophy.

If such is the case, to say that the spirit of medieval philosophy, in so far as it was constructive and creative, is really the very spirit of Christian philosophy, is to affirm at the same time that the middle ages was a period of philosophical progress and that this progress rested upon the continuity of a tradition. To place the emphasis, as I have constantly tried to do, upon its Christian elements and upon the originality which it owes to them, is to attempt to mark its distinctive feature; it is in nowise to forget, but much rather to presuppose constantly all the elements that it conserves and all the characteristics which make of it a true philosophy. Briefly, Christian philosophy is no more the whole of medieval philosophy, than the influence of Scripture is the whole of Christian philosophy; indeed, it does not even exhaust its essence but rather marks its specific difference and reveals its spirit.

ETIENNE GILSON

(Translated by A. C. PEGIS)

ART CHRONICLE

CONTEMPORARY MURAL PAINTING IN THE UNITED STATES

IT IS surely no better a time for mural painting than for any other kind of painting, but there are several considerations about mural painting which might lead one to believe that an increased effort towards wall decoration would have a salutary effect on American easel painters. And in spite of one's general depression in the face of possibilities for such work in the future, one cannot deny a few existing decorated rooms, for example, in New York City. The New School for Social Research has two halls, which although employed on occasions for various utilitarian purposes function most notably as painted walls. Orozco's room, in real fresco, has the advantage of his medium's earthy palette, but suffers from the awkward proportions of the place and an iconography which has not been wholly resolved. The faces of the social leaders, Lenin, Ghandi, etc., are realized almost as news photographs, while the connecting pattern of forms and figures are painted broadly, with a simple coherence of forms. It would not seem to compare, to the reproductions at least, of work in Mexico City, if exceeding in strength and organization the more recent large wall in Pomona College. Thomas Benton's room has the intensity of a theorist, but his observation of 1930 New York life, will by its very literalness remain more a document than a decoration. Benton's figures, modelled in high, tortured relief, are painted from the edges in, eliminating any atmospheric cloak of fusion, and reducing each composition to a violent bas-relief. The color has a harshness which

is again a literal chromatic, — the exhaustive odor of factual reality, not the bitter palette of an actual vision, which if incidentally contemporaneous, could be also universal.

On a different scale is the dining room painted by José Maria Sert for the new Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. Architecturally speaking, the building is a monument of mediocrity and false chic, but that is no reason for the fashionable condemnation of the murals along with it, for they are another thing. Sert has always been a rich man's painter. He painted churches for the last of the Bourbons, scenery for Diaghilev, and gold camieu panels for Palm Beach millionaires. He is the perfect artist for a Waldorf-Astoria, and it is a great pity that its architects and interior decorators in comparison were never fashionable but merely expensive. Sert has decorated his room with a series of very large panels, all painted in different tonalities of maroon, ox-blood, red-violet and black glazed over a silver-leaf ground — episodes from the story of Don Quixote. The workmanship has the suave craftsmanship of a Cartier clock, but it is never merely slick. There is probably no other traditional painter alive who could have composed so many varied human figures in such a convincing and fluid composition of aerial perspective. By a device of considerable ingenuity, Sert has framed each group with grape-colored drapes, behind which hang his acrobats, buffoons, or staircases, in a continuous activity of shifting interest. Sert is not an original, but a synthetic artist. He has digested Ribera, Tiepolo, Rubens and Goya, — not superficially but with full comprehension of the native descent of their tradition. And he employs, as only a man in such a line could afford to employ, a subject matter of peasant life, a tragic life of ferocious humors and sardonic griefs; the cameraderie of gallows and starvation that was in Callot's grin and Goya's sneer; — the proud savagery of bawdry that contributed a common scale of manners jealously preserved by majo and hidalgo alike. The Sert Room presupposes tradition and competence. It can be argued that it is unamerican and irrelevant to the times we are living in. So is the Waldorf-Astoria, and so on too many alternate scores are competence and tradition.

If these are the best one is offered, then why, one may ask, have murals at all? Architects diseased with the compulsion of quick building and little imagination, are constantly embarrassed in the face of color, and with scarcely a blush, are relieved to drop whatever commissions are now forthcoming into the lap of the School of Rome. To say that Eugene Savage, Ezra Winter, Allen Cox and

Barry Faulkner (whose combined yardage would how many times cover the Sistine Chapel?) will be less memorable than Blashfield, Abbey or Kenyon Cox is unfair since those masters are already forgotten. But architects would have done better than try to salve the conscience of their renaissance education in the marriage of all the arts, by frankly shooting marble slabs up to their cornices, and be done with it.

But American painters need the impetus of commissions on a large scale. Easel painting, except in the hands of the isolated great to whom easel or wall would be equally absorbing, acts centrifugally on an artist's talent. The small canvasses pile up, are shown in a gallery once every two years, and are dispersed or not, leaving a dry feeling in the fingers and heart — which would never come from the exhaustion of directed effort on a large scale, when the result is under the public appraisal of general competition. Walls are a wonderful stimulant, the enigma of whose barrenness should not be denied to any eager talent.

The Museum of Modern Art, with a gesture of courage which has not yet once been fairly appraised, attempted to do what it could for American mural painting. It invited some fifty odd easel painters, artists who had previously only had a chance to work on a small scale, to prepare small sketches for mural ideas and large fragments of a portion of the realized design. Those artists asked included nearly every name among our more liberally imaginative men who would do decorative work. Not one had the sanction of acceptance by the Academies. There were at least half of the men responding to the Museum's invitation, who generally speaking, were unknown. Only three out of the lot had ever attempted covering a large surface before. It is true that many of the best known men such as Burchfield, Benton, Boardman Robinson, Karfiol and John Sloan declined, with interest to be sure, and it is true that the conditions of the exhibition made time a goad and the given space a handicap. But in every actual commission there are restrictions to be fulfilled and artists used to be grateful for the arbitrary limits. The subject matter to be expressed was "The Post War World," in any one of its aspects. This, to prevent the artists feeling a necessity to flatter potential architectural patronage with nymphs, or the grey-eyed Minerva as Columbia. The show was by invitation rather than by competition, to eliminate the possible official gagging of a jury.

Whether one considered the exhibition as hung a failure or a suc-

cess depended on whether one was a critic, a participating or sympathetic painter, or one who believes that the Museum of Modern Art has extremely valuable services to offer in directions of experiment. The attitude of the critics can be conservatively represented in the genteel statement from the New York *American:* "Surely the Museum of Modern Art could not do better than to close at once the American Mural exhibition." The lady of the New York *Post* allowed that "Someway one feels after viewing this exhibition that any amount of old fashioned academic murals with their allegorical figures and trite echoes of classicism, would be welcome if this sort of performance is the alternative." The artists who saw the show and painted the pictures nevertheless insisted that the idea was an excitement and a stimulus to them, that in spite of their many imposed restrictions, they were delighted to find they could work on a large scale and that work with a group of other artists, all towards the same end was a genuine exhilaration. The friends of the Museum of Modern Art saw the show and realized that American painting was, — well, American painting. The Olympian scholar of the New York *Tribune* could well see the "transiently piquant episodes, but not an artist in the entire assemblage comes forward with the warrant of the unmistakable mural painter." Which is telling the boys that they are no Massaccio's. The exhibition proved lots of things. For one thing, it proved that mural painters are made, not born. Many of the easel painters painted instead of fragments of large murals, merely large easel paintings. This was, after all, their first attempt. It is not their fault alone they are not allowed work on a big scale.

Out of the thirty odd paintings submitted there were a few, a very few, to be sure, of real distinction. But there is that fraction of eminence which can redeem any amount of mediocrity, and therefore to one observer at least, the show was by no means a total failure. One cannot expect a large portion of the first excellence, but one doesn't have to look at the dull things more than once, and the good things could not have been invited separately.

Franklin Watkins, of Philadelphia, who last year won the Carnegie International with his arresting *Suicide in Costume*, sent an impressive piece which would have graced any exhibition, mural or not. It showed a yellow-robed woman in agony, felled by a girder. Her held breast gushed milk to feed a sapling. Above and behind was the stone and steel of a building in construction. The handling was clear, broad and gracious. The color, in its bland blue and cool

green and grey-greens, had that clarity where the memory of Poussin was its greatest compliment. Its title was *The Spirit of Man, Crushed by the Machine, Nourishing the Tree of Life.* The idea in its simple grandeur was equivalent to the consummation of its technic. It was, in the old sense, an heroic conception. The New York *Times*, in bestowing that accolade of real distinction, its disapproval, admits "a painting that merely nauseates deserves sharper rebuke" (than the class-conscious panels), as if the mammary gland in itself were something filthy. In the National Gallery of London hangs Tintoretto's *Origin of the Milky Way*, and in the Metropolitan, Veronese's *Venus and Mars* —.

Ben Shahn painted *The Passion of Sacco and Vanzetti.* The enlarged panel represented the Lowell Committee on the steps of the Dedham County Courthouse under whose classic portal hung officially a portrait of Judge Webster Thayer, — regarding the full coffins of two Italians. Shahn did not imagine the apotheosis of this affair as an anarchist or a communist sympathizer, as an Italian or as the member of an oppressed class. But with an appraising accuracy he has merely installed the actors of that tragedy in their proper places within a frame, and their arrangement is an inscription more surgical than any partisan approach. Though the treatment is simple, it is neither naiviste or primitivistic. It combines an attitude which is genuinely popular — popular, like a postcard, with a human characterization blander than an insult and a color as fresh as a familiar folk-object; a painted harness or a tavern sign.

Philip Reisman, more fully than anyone else accepted the given subject, *The Post War World.* His large panel is crowded but never confused and would stand any actual enlargement. Under the equestrian statue of Washington, an orator with an American Flag in one hand and a cross in the other exhorts a crowd. Behind on his left, farmers set fire to the wheat they cannot market, and on his right milk men pour full cans into a brook. The president lays a wreath on the tomb of the Unknown Soldier, and the Ku Klux Klan leaves a victim on a branch. The Elevated frames the scene on one side and on the other people disappear into a subway. It has the fascination of detail of a Flemish picture, and its message is apt, and increasingly instructive; an effective document for a class struggle. Considerable discomfort was felt on the part of the critics who having completed their education in aesthetics up to the year 1899, find "subject matter: i.e. propaganda is not *art.*" The Brook-

THE SPIRIT OF MAN CRUSHED BY THE MACHINE

FRANKLIN WATKINS

THE PASSION OF SACCO AND VANZETTI (TEMPERA)

BEN SHAHN

THE POST-WAR WORLD (TEMPERA)

PHILIP REISMAN

lyn *Eagle* screams: "It suffices to say that the panels sent in by Gellert, Shahn, Kopman and Gropper had no place in an exhibition purporting to discover material with which to enrich the walls of modern buildings! This was not an Independent Show." While allowing that anyone can be indiscreet in the Independent Show, they felt that in a Museum of Modern Art an idea was bad manners. Some of the members of the John Reed Club asserted in no uncertain terms their contempt for the symbols of the Morgan and Rockefeller physiognomy. The panels were extremely efficient. They provoked violent anger. However, is the aim of the artist in the class struggle merely to annoy? By direct insult, the insulted is angered, the sympathizers with the insulter corroborated. There is no change of opinion, no forcing of another point of view, in fact no propaganda. When Breughel, in the midst of his massacred people painted out of a most profound indignation *Herod's Soldiers Slaughtering the Innocents*, everyone knew it was the Spanish captains butchering the Dutch. But if he had afforded himself the honesty of direct portraiture, the picture would have been destroyed at once. Symbols are needed for proletarian art, but the face of Morgan becomes as much of a cliché as the unbarbered Bolshevik with a bomb. The direct symbolism and organization of Mr. Reisman's panel was as legible as the Florentine pictures of Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise. A curious exception to the almost unanimous critical disapproval of these murals with a social conscience came from the *Wall Street Journal*. The times seem to have improved the aesthetic judgment of gentlemen south of Union Square. "In only a few panels such as Ben Shahn's stinging *Passion of Sacco and Vanzetti*, Kopman's imaginative *Vision of the Militaristic State*, and to a lesser degree in the Gellert and Gropper murals, is there any fusion of carrying power or rhythm." But then, since there is not much buying or selling going on, maybe Wall Street has had time to read, for example, *The Art News*. "In only a few panels, such as Ben Shahn's stinging *Passion of Sacco and Vanzetti*, Kopman's imaginative *Vision of the Militaristic State*, and to a lesser degree in the Gropper and Gellert murals is there any fusion of spacial carrying power and sonorous rhythm with proletarian fervor."

Other panels which had a genuine feeling for the order and pattern whereby walls could be covered were either generally ignored or misunderstood by the press. Jane Berlandina's gracious triptych of the "Radio" and her large panel of "Radio Publicity" was con-

ceived in sunny tans and clear blues, a conception of aerial spirits in transparency imposed on a mosaic of lettering and objects. Louis Bouché's "Apotheosis of Transportation" was a miniature master piece of clean color and the witty formalization of autos, trains and ships, as fresh as a spring morning on the waterfront. Philip Evergood's elaborate inconography of many figures under the general heading of "Peace Offering Knowledge to the World," had an original bite of color and a wit in draughtsmanship that was too genuinely mordant to have been appreciated. Stefan Hirsch's small fresco, "The Tragedy of the Builder," had a carefully organized mural quality which was more effective than Hödler in its gawky strength. *The New Republic's* tired and ignorant critique of the show dispensed with Reginald Marsh's tempera, "Post War America," by asking "What interior architecture is conceivable, for instance, as wedded to Reginald Marsh's lurid canvas (sic) of belly-shaking, intoxicated skyscraper, locomotive and maggoty-traffic theme?" It is more than conceivable that Marsh could brilliantly hold the walls of a railroad station waiting-room, or a convention auditorium. If the subject matter of the "lurid" present does not titillate the Liberals neither does Henry Varnum Poor's dignified "Arts and Crafts," where he has been so, is it demodé? to use a composition of nudes. Thomas Wood's Cowboys had the appealing freshness and slouching ease which has left American painting with Remington. And in William Littlefield's small sketch, at least, he has definitely proved that there is one painter in America who can faithfully handle the muscular nude and invest it with a convincing contemporary symbolism.

The critics, generally speaking, had a picnic. They approached the show with all the terror of a child who goes to its dentist expecting to be hurt, and when the dentist is painless, the child feels it has been cheated. The critics would have been at a loss to like the show, and besides, the Museum of Modern Art has achieved that stature of success which makes it a fair target for unlocalized discontent. Too often painters manqué, they have certain presupposed standards which they receive in their adolescence and which they can never afford to relinquish in spite of shifting situations. The New York *Sun*, regretful of the disaster, said, "The murals lack ideas, they lack beauty, they lack interest." The New York *Times:* "And there are besides, violations of even the most catholic conceptions of good taste. . . ." One would like to know what an art critic thinks he means when he selects those letters of an unsuspecting

alphabet to spell the words: *ideas*, *beauty*, *interest*, — but above all, *good taste*.

Critics have only the negative powers of obstructionists. They cannot keep really interested people from coming to see paintings. And architects, in refusing to employ any mural painters but the ones they do, add merely amendments to the testimony of their own obliquity. In that incredible and architectually irrelevant pile which will be known as Rockefeller Radio Center, few if any of the artists in the Museum of Modern Art's Mural Show [1] will receive commissions. Ezra Winter prepares the Largest Canvas in the History of the World for that biggest place of highest honor which Sert, Diego Rivera or Jean Charlot could have, with some interest filled. And at the present writing only Boardman Robinson, of all our men, has the equivocal responsibility of redeeming from complete oblivion the painter's contribution of Radio City.

The most important thing about the exhibition of mural painting at the Museum of Modern Art was the fact that it was held. Too many similarly optimistic notions are projected but never realized. Its numerous faults of hanging, pressing economy, haste and arrangements, while tedious, are ultimately irrelevant. An actual start has been made. One hopes that the experiment can be repeated annually. If such a thing were possible, American artists might find themselves with a developing mural hand and eye. Those critics who bewail the lack of individual excellence in initial work in this present show might recall other first works. How many novels had Balzac piled up before he was the Balzac one reads? Who recalls the name of Wagner's first opera? And even enthusiasts have considerable difficulty in defending the early work of many of the great mural painters and deprecate it on grounds of being "school" work, in the "manner" of an influential master. If there were more large exhibitions such as the Museum of Modern Art created, there might indeed rise a school, a national school of distinction and genuine creation which would feed the architects of the future in spite of themselves.

LINCOLN KIRSTEIN

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[1] *Murals by American Painters and Photographers.* (Catalogue of the exhibition.) Museum of Modern Art: 11 West 53rd Street, New York City. With articles on mural painting and on photomurals, with biographical and technical information concerning every artist, and with twenty-five full-page reproductions of the small panels and large fragments of the paintings, and eleven full page reproductions of the photo-murals. Price, 50 cents.

MUSIC CHRONICLE

YADDO AND GURRE

THE Spring's major tonal excitements were unfolded in the most charmingly incongruous setting that could possibly have been devised. Through the uncertain blossoming of ending April and declining day there was a northern movement of vehicles enclosing ears, fingers and vocal chords (for this occasion these only were of importance among the circles of flesh) converging upon the somewhat flattened landscape of Saratoga Springs. Here were the most lovely buildings in America veiling their closed eyes with chocolate wooden lace. The fringe of fantastic columns plunged from jigsawed cornices four stories downward to the floor where in another season creaks the endless music of a thousand rocking-chairs. But on April twenty-ninth there was only the romantic fascination of the desolate, forsaken and abandoned. The great galleries and courtyards enclosed only cubes of air impregnated with lace parasols, Hungarian bands and Congress boots, General Grant and Turkish cozy-corners; and that night in a dream the tall columns beneath the Mansards swayed to an essentialized Waldteufel.

In the morning a knot of people were encased in romanticism of a different sort. The purest 1890 flowered into Yaddo complete with Richardsonian granite, golden oak, pseudo-medieval stairways and diamond-paned casements. Against this background were displayed seventeen items of recent American music, carefully chosen and efficiently exposed.

At the first notes of the insistent bitterness of Israel Citkowitz's

string quartet, the Mauve Decade faded quietly and the air was charged with 1932, harsh and a little crude but of a welcome antisepsis. A white surgeon's table was wheeled in, the body of Aoide was dissected with the sharpest scalpels and the skeleton revealed in its clean and shining pallor. An arrangement of jerkily revolving planes was strung on the spine of a slow small intent melodic line, which gave the impression of infinite projection beyond the stated close. The violins seeming made of steel and the bows strung with the wire hairs of a metallic horse chanted of deliberation, angularity and tension.

One of the two finest things at the festival was the Stabat Mater of Virgil Thomson on words by Max Jacob. Mrs. Archibald MacLeish intoned with consummate skill the curves of reticent song beneath which the string quartet murmured unbelievably simple and touching phrases. The clear flow of harmony was diatonic or modal with an occasional diffident surprise. No one has dared to be so simple since Palestrina except possibly Sauguet.

This freshness and economy was still in the mind during the performance of the Roger Sessions Sonata. There was a stale flat air blanketing its texture from end to end and for this reason it had a strange depraved fascination. A slight inefficiency of performance made a later revision of opinion desirable.

The songs of Paul Frederic Bowles were small tenuous epigrams containing almost no music at all. Such as did exist was good and pointed the words to perfection — surprisingly because there was a lack of inevitability. The effect was made but not in any expected way. Is this perhaps originality? The morning ended with the facile facetiousness of Mr. Gruenberg.

Under the evening and the shades of the lamps there was less strangeness and more contact. The not unfamiliar Roy Harris Sonata chipped a deep and permanent groove. This is clangorous music of power, beauty and originality. A few things are out of key, a few are crude and disproportionate, but the whole sings splendidly a curious mixture of the sweetness of loam and the bitterness of girders. There is a terrific driving force in the great chunky masses of the first movement, a heart-twisting richness and breadth of song in the slow movement, and a flashing sardonic grin in portions of the scherzo which would be hard to match. The cumulative force acquired in the coda by the reworking of the prelude leaves the listener clutching a large and valid experience that contains subtlety and strength in the proportions of mastery.

Mr. Blitzstein's Serenade gave the impression of a chorale seen through a prism of Iceland spar. He stepped carefully from tone to tone as if crossing a brook on stepping-stones, testing his weight on their stability before bearing on them. There was not an interstice anywhere. This procedure is sometimes good, but in the present case it seemed to prove that only the poor are ashamed of holes in their socks.

Mr. Levant's Sonatina had no profound intent but much amusement. Between Stravinskian gleams of no authenticity was the exposition of a charming and unspoiled nous.

Sunday was notable on account of Charles Ives and Aaron Copland. Mr. Piston's Sonata for flute and piano had no unity of purpose but humor neatly and beautifully pointed. Between a little Hindemith and a little Stravinsky was the confused impression of a kitten chased by a military band.

Mr. Brant's suite for the same instruments was cold Apollon Musagetes served up for breakfast hashed in sour cream.

But in Mr. Ives' seven songs we heard the great work of a curious genius. There was a realization that he established twenty years ago many of the conventions that others firmly impressed and fixed in our minds. There is now more general understanding of what was then not ready to be received. A lengthy analytical treatment must soon be given to the great mass of which this was only a small fragment. One of the unforgettable things taken away from Yaddo was Charlie Rutlage with its distillation of the true flavor of the West; the false fronts of clapboards, the smell of dusty saddles and the clank of harness against a horizon of immense blue.

Finally there was gratitude for a repeated hearing of Mr. Copland's Piano Variations. More than ever now the Ode seems like a retreat for here is music of unexampled bitterness and muscle, of repellent ugliness and cold hard biting beauty. Here truly is music stripped and pared to the bone. With every note is the conviction: "This is good. This is how music should be written."

The curiously blended freight of the return from Saratoga was the romanticism of its architecture and Mr. Copland's frozen essence of acid modernity.

Spring's other gift, Arnold Schoenberg's Gurrelieder, was conveyed by one of Mr. Stokowski's complex mechanisms. Several hundred people on the stage of the Metropolitan Opera House making noises for an hour and a half was the net result. In this young and strangely unimpressive work everything is blunted and

softened, everything merges, blends and blurs, all corners are rounded. Nothing has force or impact. There is scarcely a sharp line anywhere. The foot exploring for firm stone finds only unstable fluid escaping from the touch.

The orchestration is largely at fault. The vast corpus that Mahler could use so well and with so much point here utters only negation. The fault is seldom in the harmonic basis. But what on an anticipatory piano is a precise and clear chromatic sequence, fuses on the orchestra to a migratory wail, loses all shape, fails of effect. The same is true of the choral writing whose tendency is always to become blurred. When there is subtlety and chromaticism in the chord structure the result as in the present instance is only amorphousness and lack of outline.

All this is not to say that there is not great tenderness and charm. in some of the arias of the first part, after the reflective slow-paced sunset has had space to expand and glow monotonously. In spite of its size the Gurrelieder suffer from compression, and in the swift most varicolored stream of the later sections all sense of direction is lost.

The performance, apart from the three most prominent soloists, was astonishingly inept. Such lamentably mismanaged Sprechstimme has seldom been heard, and Mr. Stokowski flagrantly misread several of the tempo and dynamic indications.

Heightened by contrast with this, Mr. Copland and his associates glisten with perfection that is only slightly more than their due. Exalt the eagle.

ROBERT PITNEY

CORRESPONDENCE

TRADITION IN AMERICAN PAINTING

Sirs:

Mr. Hyatt Mayor's article on the Whitney Museum, entitled "In Hopes" (HOUND & HORN, January–March 1932), appears to me rather two-minded: intellectually he approves, fashionably he distrusts. He says many keen and true things (such as his plea for inexpensive chapbooks on American artists), then he plays safe with a little disparagement. I don't know why enthusiasm for America's accomplishments in the arts is always looked on as vulgar and suspect: perhaps it is our great national inferiority complex; but more likely, we simply don't know yet how much we have already accomplished, and how it has been done.

Mr. Mayor refers to "a violent nationalism" in American painting; but where is it? Academically we have been successively British, French Neoclassic, Dusseldorfian, Barbizan, Impressionistic, Post-Impressionistic. He then fails to see "why it should be more virtuous to paint as an American than as a Frenchman"; but is that really the way to state the problem? And as stated, is it true either in fact or implication? The talented artist without genius will certainly be more virtuous (i.e., stronger) if he paints according to the American trend, rather than if he copies a foreign model, simply because the American source is nearer to him and means more to us; whereas the American painter with genius, who paints a thing as he sees and feels it, although no American ever painted that way before, paints as an American.

But Mr. Mayor then states that in painting "the Americans have no great tradition to fall back on, as the Germans have in the Cranachs and in Gothic sculpture." The joker there lies in the debatable adjective "great"; I fear that many readers would interpret his statement to mean that we have no tradition at all.

The fact is that Americans have a long and venerable folk-art tradition. Why our ancestors felt such an impulse toward paint, even though most of them had never seen a real painting, is a surprising puzzle, the answer of which is probably bound up with the bigger problem why the American arts spring democratically from the soil, as distinguished from the European arts, which usually descend from the aristocracy. Whatever the answer, it is certain that Benjamin West, in Springfield, Pennsylvania, began drawing at the age of seven, used Indian dyes, had a Cherokee for his instructor, and was established as a proficient portrait painter before he went to Europe in 1760. Copley in Boston had no instructor at all, according to his own account, and never saw a good picture until he left America in 1774. These two men always retained something of the Primitive (or the "Puritan," as it used to be called) in their work. Lesser lights fared quite the same. Samuel Stillman Osgood (who later married one of Poe's literary ladies) beheld his first real pictures in the shop-signs of Marseilles.[1] Francis R. Alexander, of Connecticut, when he first reached Providence in 1820 (where his pictures had been sent for framing), was similarly impressed with the shop-signs there. How many others had like experiences we can only conjecture; yet the number must have been large, for these painters (most of whose names have since been lost) left a great body of American folk painting, the product of a native, vigorous, unEuropean tradition. These paintings are to be found everywhere in New England, Pennsylvania, and probably all along the sea-coast, in the old family portraits which later generations (whose taste was sweetened by international culture) banished to the attic, hung under the stairs, threw out on the ash-heap. These pictures, painted by self-taught artists, often journeymen, are often exceedingly beautiful — at least, from the modern point of view, though often not from the sentimental Victorian point of view. They had the fundamental of great art — perfect honesty; their portraits reproduced reality, to the point of pain.

[1] See B. B. Thatcher's "Lines on the Life of an Artist" (*Boston Book*, Boston, 1838) and Osgood's letter to the London *Athenaeum*, July 7, 1838. For this information I am indebted to Miss Annie Edward Barcus.

They are Puritan in their frankness. Lace, jewelry, and fine dress, indicative of the sitter's social position, were rendered painstakingly. They tended towards formula in details: in the rhythm of hands, in the cut of a coat, in the reproduction of eyelashes. And though these painters were frequently ignorant of anatomy, chiaroscuro, or perspective, yet they achieved characterization, design, a set of formulæ, and individual styles. It is preposterous that these, the ear-marks of vital artistic history in other countries, should not be so taken in our own history.

Here is the origin of American painting. It was killed off by two events: the discovery of photography and the founding of the art schools. The photography killed the demand and the schools the supply. The photography was part of a natural evolution: when the time came to develop the Primitive tradition into something more complex, the machine forced these painters into other fields and towards greater efforts. But then the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition of 1876 (there is something ironical in the date) started the fashion of being international; and the academies were founded, unconsciously dedicating themselves to the destruction of anything not imported. And now, as the spiral completes its round, these academies of foreign inspiration have proved useless — as Mr. Mayor all too truly remarks. Then why again preach internationalism!

Bellows, Sloane, and some others, did look to the more untutored Victorian past of American painting, and learned a great deal from it, at a time when everybody else was trying to preserve Cézanne's immortal apples. The result has proved that we can only debase imported art, whereas our real task is to heighten our tradition.

S. Foster Damon

Mr. Damon is quite right. I do look down my nose at American primitives, while at the same time realising that they may be the only things that can help American painters to recapture a healthy naïveté. Although our "primitives" abound in charm, I do not call them great because they produced nothing really memorable. Few provincial schools of painting have, and the Avignon *Pietá* is a perhaps unique exception.

Our American "primitives" are really not primitive — not an art that is gathering head for greater things (like Giotto's predecessors) — but provincial — a metropolitan art in local decadence. Our American born provincial painters did not invent painting out

of nothing, as Mr. Damon implies. They were not taught by professional painters, but they saw plenty of imported engravings after paintings. As early as 1727 a mezzotint of Cotton Mather was made in Boston by J. S. Copley's stepfather, Peter Pelham.

What you discover for yourself is rarely as well rounded as what you learn from a master, but it strikes you with sharper force. Hence the charm of any provincial art, its directness. When a provincial artist develops some particular virtuosity, he is apt to push it to eccentricity, being unchecked by the criticism of his peers, as Bermejo and the Crivellis did. This is never a fault of our provincials, since none of them were skilful enough to be threatened by that danger.

Provincial art is more or less the same the world over, and I cannot see that ours is particularly American in anything except its scenes and sitters. In 1820 pears were painted more or less the same way on silk in Canton or on white velvet in Gloucester, Mass. Many of the wandering "early American" painters were German and English. The earliest, and perhaps the most beautiful "American primitives" were done by a mediocre Dutch painter called Frans Post, who went out to Brazil in 1636 with the expedition of Count John Maurice of Nassau-Siegen and stayed there for seven years, during which exile his painting took on the directness, freshness and charm of the best "North American primitives" or of portraits from the Fayum or Palmyra, of the Douanier Rousseau, of Neapolitan shop signs, or of any provincial painting anywhere. It is curious to remark that although this exile made Frans Post into a fresh and delicious painter (which anyone can verify by climbing up into the garrets of the Louvre, where three or four Posts of about 1640 hang in the Musée de la Marine) he was a scumbly, muddy mediocrity before and after, who could not hold a candle to the expertness of Dutch painters of his time.

Mr. Damon cannot find any "violent nationalism" in American painting of today. I was referring to the virtuous attitude of Luks, Kuhn and others when painting American subjects, their smugness in proclaiming that "this at least is not the school of Paris." This chauvinism is as barren as copying Picasso. The masters of any art have never been ashamed to steal from everywhere.

An American painter should paint American subjects simply because they are what he meets when he goes out to buy his morning paper, they are what he knows best and can see into most deeply. He should try to render them as well as he is able without thinking

whether he is painting in a Paris style or a New York style, or his own style or any style. Degas, or somebody, said that to paint well "il faut se faire bête." Having learned everything, the artist must forget it and become a child again — and that is where our "American primitives" can freshen and quicken.

A. Hyatt Mayor

Excerpt from a Letter Written to Bernard Bandler II

Our discussion about Penhally[1] is as you say hardly one to be continued in writing. It seems to me that we just have a slightly different slant on this question of tradition. I remember when Lawrence made the point of America's being the great death continent. Something in me said deeply that was true. Baudelaire's picture of the world when it is Americanized (you remember when the child in his cradle dreams of marrying a great heiress and so on) has also impressed me deeply.

We disagree only on a minor point. It seems to me that they did not, all of them, leave tradition behind but that tradition itself took a downward, a deathward slant. The child was strangled in the cradle.

I might illustrate that point by the Meriwethers, the family I know most about. They came over here because Charles II owed Nicholas Meriwether money and paid it with a grant of land. Old Nicholas did not come himself but he sent three of his five sons; that is, he cut them off from the life of their fathers and all that it held for the sake of material goods. (Of course that is a strict way of looking at it; the young men, of course had no idea of what they were relinquishing.)

One or two of these young men went back and got English wives. All of them made a strenuous effort to continue the English way of life. The manners and ways of life of their fathers persisted for several generations but were gradually transformed and buried finally under newer ways. One of my loutish cousins, if he ever reads any history, would know dimly that his sympathies should be with the Jacobites, but he wouldn't know why. Similarly he pronounces certain words certain ways and gives certain names to his children without knowing why. He might tell you that it was because his father did thus and so but it is just as much because one of his

[1] Land & Tradition by Bernard Bandler II. Review of *Penhally*: Caroline Gordon. Hound & Horn. Vol. V No. 3, p. 493.

great grandfathers did thus and so. That is, tradition operates through people who are not even conscious of its existence.

But certainly we do say NO to many, to most of the vital things that Europe somehow manages to preserve through poverty, war and every other disaster. I would like to think it is because we are young and raw and exuberant, but I don't. I think it is the blighting influence of the Anglo-Saxon. I heard a Dutchman complaining the other night that even the laboring classes in Europe heard good music, went to museums to see good pictures. But the English lower classes never enjoyed any such pleasures. And the upper classes in England have always considered any display of intelligence bad form. And the English, like the modern Americans, have always made the continent their playground simply because they couldn't have that kind of fun at home. It is the great death continent all right and the Anglo-Saxon is the nigger in the wood pile.

CAROLINE GORDON

Sirs:

I have a theory, mainly intuitive but persistent, which I should like to confirm or nullify by what facts I am able to bring to bear upon it. In the hope that it may interest you also, I am writing to ask your opinion.

The theory is briefly this, that there are in America today many young writers who by the limitations and advantages of their intellectual and economic background are unconsciously forming a group or class which I envision as "The New Conservatives." These literary youngsters, born in the century's first decade, too late to participate actively in either the physical or moral aspects of the war, were nevertheless in the twenties swept headlong into consequent revolts and reactions which for them had no foundation or meaning in actual experience. The habits resulting from participation in these reactions persisted, long after passion died, until in the last two or three years, by reason of sustained if somewhat unconfined intellectual curiosity, these young men and women have accomplished a re-orientation which, though leaving them children, has left them wise. Those who have not in the course of ten years' bewilderment succumbed to the Brokers' Culture, are now of a conservative temper because, having through bitter trial and error experience learned intellectual humility, they now suspect alike the evangelical apostles of Communism, the complacent, sterile proclamations of the Republican Party, and the scholarship

which glories in statistical tables and is not interested in moral issues. Observing their tremendously erudite brethren of a generation gone now employing Liberty Loan Methods to whoop up the Soviet, these new Conservatives remember without bitterness that many years ago they spoke passionate words which hadn't much meaning for them except as an expression of hero-worship, embraced experience for sensations' sake until the universe blew up and they were left with a shelf of crumbling idols and their exhausted senses to make a new world out of the chaos, alone. Some of those who remained to see it through are still engaged in this process, and my mind persists in thinking of them in terms equally unsatisfactory to Radical and Liberal.

If these are not just words, what form has this new conservatism taken? That is substantially what I wish to discover, and as a suggestion for your comment, I believe that: in their ideology they are refusing to be swayed by a sudden emotional flux toward Utopian paneceas for sick souls; in economics they are slow to action but find a tentative point of agreement in the principle of planning; in literature they evidence a return toward romantic realism and traditional forms.

That is the gist of the "theory" I wish to develop. No doubt it has been badly stated, but until I receive suggestions from persons like yourself it will be difficult (unless I start to read everything that's been written in the last twenty years) to pursue it. Perhaps your experience does not permit any agreement whatsoever. That is just what I should like to know. If I have not been thorough or lucid enough in statement (and I have been purposely brief) I should be glad, if you are sufficiently interested, to elaborate.

Should you refer me to anyone who, like myself, is working out his allegiances in American literature, I would consider it most kind; and I shall esteem any comment you may care to make, or any reference to book or article which contains your opinions on the subject.

THEODORE P. MARVEL

BOOK REVIEWS

POETS AND OTHERS

I

POEMS 1928–31. *By Allen Tate. Charles Scribner's Sons.* 1932. $2.00.

POETIC defects may be considered under two heads, defects of detail and defects of conception. Defects of detail do not extend their influence beyond the passage or phrase affected; defects of conception, like Mr Jeffers' non-moral narrative procedure, Laforguian irony, the fundamental obscurity of most of Mr Crane's themes, the graceful elegiac sprawl of the later Eliot and of Mr MacLeish, are part of the very texture of a poem and affect it pretty evenly. Mr Tate's defects are, except in a few poems, defects of detail. They are distressingly numerous and even elementary, but one can pick an impressive poet out from among them.

Thus in the *Ode to Fear* Mr Tate drops two syllables from one line and one from another, relying on long syllables to fill the line. But he is not writing quantitative verse and the attempt to shift into it at will is destructive of whatever convention may previously have been established:

> World over, crouched on the air's feet.

The line is supposed to be equivalent to an iambic pentameter line.

Careless run-over lines, with run-over stops at the end of the first foot, the failure to correlate line and content, may all be observed and rather frequently. In the *Ode to the Confederate Dead* one finds this:

> Those midnight restitutions of the blood
> You know — the immitigable pines, the smoky frieze
> Of the sky.

Since one has visualized the sky at the word *frieze*, the words *of the sky* are an anti-climax and are very awkwardly placed. They help break the next line into several units; they are bad meter. The only revision necessary here was their omission.

The metrical emphasis too often receives little or no attention. One of the sonnets closes on the line:

> But gentle death, who is confusion's king.

The words *who is* are superfluous; if used at all, they should be unstressed; but they are used and stressed heavily.

There is frequently a ludicrous failure to fulfill a pretentious beginning:

> Our elder brother whom I had not seen
> These twenty years until you brought him back
> From the cyclonic West where he had been
> Stormed by the shaking furies in the track
> We know so well, which is these arteries —

After the first five and a half lines we are expecting the revelation of some dark family tragedy, something known to the family group in question and to them only, but we suddenly find ourselves standing in the public garden; nor do we get any further information about the shaking furies and the cyclonic West.

Here is another passage from the *Ode to the Confederate Dead:*

> We shall say only, the leaves whispering
> In the improbable mists of nightfall
> That flies on multiple wing:
> Night is the beginning and the end,
> And in between the ends of distraction
> Waits mute speculation, the patient curse
> That stones the eyes, or like the jaguar leaps
> For his own image in a jungle pool, his victim.

Except for the last two lines, this is one of the most moving passages I know; the last two lines seem to me hopelessly bad. To have a curse stone the eyes is a strain on the mind's eye, and to transform the curse into a jaguar and then to make the jaguar perform in a manner so impossibly unfeline is worse. The lines fail, however, not only because of the mixed figure, but because the act of stoning and the act of the jaguar are not perceived poetically — they are simply mentioned because of some vague feeling the poet has associated with them. Even Mr Eliot's sleek Brazilian jaguar, verging on doggerel as he does, has more poetic identity.

As I have said, few of the poems display vices of conception. One might mention the *Ode to Fear*, which rests on an initial assumption of violent feeling nowhere clarified or communicated: the poem is a fog of meaningless excitement. The neo-Websterian meter

of *Causerie*, similarly, establishes vagueness of feeling as its norm. I mean that the movement of the verse is of necessity slipshod, an uneasy compromise between the lyrical and the didactic that simply cannot speak with precision. This compromise is inherent in the very conception of the poem.

Nearly always the blunders are specific and are limited in their influence. This is an important fact: there are so many blunders that Mr Tate is frequently regarded as inferior to Mr MacLeish, let us say, or Mr Eliot, since they commit fewer blunders of detail, and since their defects of conception correspond to the popular sentimentalities of the moment. Mr Tate's blunders are sufficiently irritating and even bewildering, but to throw him out because of them is like throwing Shakespeare out for irregular spelling.

Mr Tate is usually trying for something unimpeachably adult, for unqualifiedly major poetry. One may safely say that except for Mr Stevens at a few rare moments, no poet of the generation preceding Mr Tate, and except for Mr Howard Baker, no poet of his own generation, has aimed at anything comparably serious. The quality of Dr Williams is superb, but the range is limited; Mr Pound and Mr Crane are ambitious, but their inspiration is a trifle suspect.

Mr Tate's range is religious, philosophical, moral, social, and personal, and in each of its aspects is mature and astute, and in its wholeness is coherent. He is the most mature poet to appear in America since Mr Robinson, and despite his clumsiness he writes better than Mr Robinson. Mr Robinson is often satisfied with neat doggerel; Mr Tate is always willing to flounder like a gentleman.

It is this deadly seriousness in most of Mr Tate's work that often gives even his worst poems moments of greater power than nearly any other contemporary work. His *Sonnets of the Blood* are the most abominably written series of sonnets this side of Barnabe Barnes, yet out of them one can pick lines with the grandeur and perfection of the greatest tragic poetry:

> This message hastens, lest we both go down
> Scattered with no character to death. . . .
>
> I ask you therefore will it end tonight. . . .
>
> In Shenandoah and along Bull Run
> Sunk in a time inimical to date. . . .

More than any poet since Hardy, Mr Tate has felt the country in which he lives, not only the country, but the people, whether dead or living; his poems are heavy with history:

Unkempt the fathers waste in solitude
Under the hills of clay. . . .

It seemed the grandfather of his mother

In knee-breeches silver-buckled like a song
His hair long and a cocked hat on his head
A straight back and slow dignity for stride,
The road, red clay sun-cracked and baked
Led fearlessly through scrub pines on each side.

On this feeling for place and for the past, Mr Tate can build his *Mother and Son*, dealing with the decadence of his tradition, a great tragic poem in spite of its defects; he can build his *Ode to the Confederate Dead*, which I venture to suspect is one of the greatest odes in the language. The more personal poems on wholly religious or philosophical themes, are enriched by this background. *The Last Days of Alice*, in fact, is a lyric by a man who finds himself at last torn out of his background and existing in a quantitative and humanly meaningless society, of which the political expression is Mr Hoover or Mr Coolidge, of which the social expression is Mr Henry Ford, and of which the moral expression and the literary ideal are Mr Jeffers or Mr Cabell. Mr Tate's essay in the symposium *I'll Take My Stand* provides a fair gloss to the poem if the reader needs one.

The Last Days of Alice (along with a few other poems by Mr Tate) is remarkable historically in a way that needs to be mentioned: it is ironical, but the irony is not of the post-Byronic or Laforguian sort, that is, it is not directed at the author by himself for trying to define untenable values. It is directed at Alice, the symbol of modernity, and it is directed from Mr Tate's own point of view, in which he feels himself secure. There has been no comparably adult use of irony in several generations.

Since I have objected to Mr Tate's blank verse, I had better offer a warning in connection with his rhymed verse. All of his verse has been heavily influenced by Websterian rhythms, but in the best of his rhymed poems he succeeds in refining those rhythms and making a very firm and sensitive instrument from them. In the passage which I have quoted from the *Ode to the Confederate Dead*, the passage ending with the jaguar, the rhythm wavers toward prose, but the wavering is controlled and very expressive. *Emblems I*, as beautiful a poem in its way as Mr Tate has ever written, illustrates the same quality.

Finally, I do not wish to leave the impression that Mr Tate's poetry is entirely a matter of fragments to be salvaged from a general mass of wreckage. There is a reasonable number of poems in which the flaws are negligible, or from which they are absent: in his first book *The Subway* and *Ditty* at the least; in this book *The Cross*, *The Twelve*, *The Eagle*, *Last Days of Alice*, *Emblems I* and *III*, and *Records I* and *II*, if no more. These, and the imperfect but magnificent *Mother and Son* and *Ode to the Confederate Dead*, probably mark the highest level to which twentieth century poetry has attained.

II

THE POEMS OF WILFRED OWEN. *A New Edition Including Many Pieces now First Published, and Notices of His Life and Work by Edmund Blunden. The Viking Press. N. Y.* 1931. $2.00.

WILFRED OWEN was killed in action at the age of 25, a few days before the beginning of the armistice. He learned to write poetry in the trenches and on leave, and what he might have done in calmer times is a matter for speculation only. The war, though it probably matured him rapidly in many ways, must have made careful composition next to impossible. The present edition of his poems, for example, gives in the notes the first version of *The Unreturning*, the final version of which appears in the main body of the book. The final version is devoid of character; the first version, though rough, has force. How much good poetry was revised away under stress and in distraction, how much may not have received the completion of which Owen was capable, there is no way of knowing. If he is judged on the work he left, he is not, I fear, as Mr Blunden claims he is, another Keats. He is a very imperfect poet. But I have lived with his poems for more than ten years, and I venture the opinion that he is a poet of more than ordinary durability and interest.

The most successful poems are *The Show*, *The Send-off*, *Greater Love*, and *Apologia pro Poemate Meo*. *Strange Meeting*, often cited as his best work, is very even in texture, but, for me, rather evenly vague. Some of the best poetry is to be found scattered through the less successful poems: *S.I.W.*, *Mental Cases*, *A Terre*, and a few others. The writing, even in the best pieces, is never wholly adequate; the feeling is always a little muffled by an even distribution of slightly weak diction and insensitive rhythm; it reads like the

powerful but not quite satisfactory translation of greater poetry. Yet the conviction behind the lines is intense and is in some way communicated; when all the faults have been checked over, there remains a large fund of very real power in the poetry. This is from *Mental Cases:*

> These are men whose minds the Dead have ravished.
> Memory fingers in their hair of murders,
> Multitudinous murders they once witnessed . . .
> Therefore still their eyeballs shrink tormented
> Back into their brains, because on their sense
> Sunlight seems a blood-smear; night comes blood-black;
> Dawn breaks open like a wound that bleeds afresh
> — Thus their heads wear this hilarious, hideous
> Awful falseness of set-smiling corpses.
> — Thus their hands are plucking at each other;
> Picking at the rope-knouts of their scourging. . . .

The next passage is from *A Terre:*

> O Life, Life, let me breathe, — a dug-out rat!
> Not worse than ours the existences rats lead —
> Nosing along at night down one safe rut,
> They find a shell-proof home before they rot.
> Dead men may envy living mites in cheese,
> Or good germs even. Microbes have their joys,
> And subdivide, and never come to death.

Passages like these are fragments, nothing more. Were the entire poems from which they are taken as good, they would still be fragments. Yet they have a toughness, a casual but not uncalculated violence, that reminds one of some of the better passages in the secondary and lesser Elizabethan dramatists. The rhetorical sophistication of these passages is slight beside that of men like Marston and Dekker, and there is no attempt here to imitate such writers, but there is some generic similarity in the mode of apprehension. Yet this kind of rhetoric requires a drama back of it, to sustain it and justify it: just as we tend to imagine the play that Dekker should have written when we come to a great passage, we are forced here to reconstruct the drama in which these lines were spoken, which Owen took for granted as a part of his environment, but which for us has fallen away, the War. Without that reconstruction, such passages are melodramatic and incomplete, but if we are willing to value the passages as fine fragments, the reconstruction is possible. Owen did not live long enough to objectify

and write his drama; he might never have comprehended it adequately. But these declamations from the living maelstrom are probably the most impressive records of it that we have, and simply as poetry their value is considerable.

The next to the last line of *The Send-Off* is marred in this edition by an alteration. "Still village wells" has become "village wells." The adjective is necessary, and if Owen ever had it there in any of his versions, it ought to be left.

This edition contains notes on Owen by Edmund Blunden and Frank Nicholson, as well as extensive quotations from Owen's letters from the front. The letters are detailed and moving. Owen, like Sassoon and others in their group, hoped that his writings might reduce the possibility of future wars, but in all likelihood his reputation will rest wholly on his poetry as poetry. Our governing criminals and the slack mass of their victims will probably never hear of him.

III

THE SIGNATURE OF PAIN, AND OTHER POEMS. *By Alan Porter. The John Day Company. New York.* 1931. $2.50.

THRUST AT THE SKY, AND OTHER POEMS. *By Mac-Knight Black. Simon and Schuster.* 1932. $2.00.

THE DARK LAND. *By Kathleen Tankersley Young. The Dragon Press.* 240 *Linden Ave., Ithaca, New York.* $1.00.

THURSO'S LANDING, AND OTHER POEMS. *By Robinson Jeffers. Liveright, Inc.* 1932. $2.50.

MORTAL TRIUMPH, AND OTHER POEMS. *By Selden Rodman. Farrar and Rhinehart.* 1932. $2.00.

NOW THAT THE HAWTHORNE BLOSSOMS AND OTHER POEMS. *By Althea Bass. Bruce Humphries, Inc. Boston.* 1931.

THE FLOWERING STONE. *By George Dillon. The Viking Press.* 1931. $1.75.

MR ALAN PORTER is by far the best poet in this group. He has endeavored in much of his work to acquire something of the style of the 17th century, but has imitated it from without, with small evidence of comprehending the sensibility that produced it. To this extent he is "literary" rather than traditional. Most of his work, however, is graceful, and a good half of it is readable. The best

poems in the book are *The Signature of Pain*, a tricky and shallow but amusing exercise in early 17th century blank verse, *The Shining of Peace* and *The Window*, two excellent lyrics in a discreetly 17th century idiom, and two others, probably the best in the book, which quite frankly display a post-Symbolist method and sensibility, *Museum* and *When from the Alien Multitude*. The Symbolist sensibility is not much like the Metaphysical, and is for the most part far inferior to it, but it is Mr Porter's own sensibility; through it, he touches whatever reality he is equipped to recognize. Building upon it, he is very likely to get somewhere. The last two poems are very fine in their way:

> The day was empty. Very pale with dust,
> A chalk road set its finger at the moors.
> The drab, damp air so blanketed the town
> Never an oak swung leather leaf. The chimneys
> Pushed up their pillars at the loose-hung sky;
> And through the haze, along the ragstone houses,
> Red lichens dulled to a rotten-apple brown.
>
> . . . . .
>
> Suddenly, turning a byeway corner, a cripple,
> Bloodless with age, lumbered along the road.
> The motes of dust whirled at his iron-shod crutches
> And quickly settled. A dog whined. The old
> Cripple looked round and, seeing no man, gave
> A quick, small, piping chuckle, swung a pace,
> And stopped to look about and laugh again.
> "That," said a girl in a flat voice, "is God."
> Her mother made no answer: she remembered,
> "I knew an old, lame beggar who went mad."
> He lumbered along the road and turned a corner;
> His tapping faded and the day was death.

There is something irreducibly obscure about the intention of this passage, but the firmness and richness of the presentation are remarkable. The best work in the book is worth keeping and rereading. The book opens with an amusing barrage of commendatory verses by Mr Porter's friends, most of them charmingly bad and hence excellent of their kind.

Miss Young's second book of verse displays exactly the same virtues and limitations as her first. The limitations are those of the entire contemporary school of writing which depends wholly upon mood — usually the dream-convention — as a principle of coherence. The logical content of words is not utilized to any great

extent: their fringe of feeling becomes almost their entire source of meaning. This means that only a small fraction of their value is brought into play and that more words must be used to get anything said — the method makes for diffusion and is usually ruinous to small talents.

Miss Young's talent is a small one, but it is definitely a talent and has survived the ordeal in so far as the ordeal can be survived by any talent. She is wholly aware of the kind and measure of diffusion which her method necessitates and has adjusted her style very skillfully. Her perceptions are of tenuous, yet of indubitable, interest; her meter — a free verse that is almost a nervous prose — is exactly related to the quality of her perceptions. Her poems are always thin, but are always alive. Mr MacLeish and Mr Eliot are somewhere in her background, and, though she is slighter than either one of them at his best, she is definitely more skillful than either within her narrower range and she displays no trace of their sickly self-pity — her work has an admirably clean impersonality which is rare in work of its kind. She is one of the two or three writers under forty who display any knowledge whatsoever of free verse.

I might excuse myself from quoting her work on the grounds that she has frequently appeared in the HOUND AND HORN; actually there is a better reason, that to feel the quality of her work one really needs to read a book of it. She interests me, but I do not approve of what she is doing: one book of this sort is enough — there is no possibility of variety in such work, one poem melting into the next in the memory as one reads. She has a talent of about the order of Turbervile, but instead of concentrating it into a few ponderable and durable epigrams she has spun it out into a fine cobweb which is visible only when the light is right.

MacKnight Black's *Thrust at the Sky* is a narrative poem of moderate length, which he had not yet completed at his death. It deals with an architect's love for a young woman and of his giving her up to a rival in order to obtain the commission for a skyscraper which he has been longing to design. The subject is dangerous but is not uninteresting; it could very easily be sentimentalized beyond endurance, or it might possibly be given a good deal of power. Black's treatment is simply meaningless. He sees his people and they see each other only as fragmentary perceptions, planes, edges, clouds, of light and dark. There is no feeling for the plot whatever, no clue to the real thoughts or feelings of the characters. Black's free verse

is too loose to be really sensitive to the kind of perception that most occupied him; it is as if one should try to translate Verlaine into Whitmanian cadences. The shorter poems in the book show the same insensitivity.

In the spring of 1930 I published in *Poetry* a review of Mr Jeffers' *Dear Judas*, in which I summarized the chief weaknesses of his narrative poetry. The same weaknesses persist in *Thurso's Landing*, though in a milder form. The doctrinaire hysteria of the earlier narratives is seldom to be found here. There is an attempt at some sort of coherent narrative, but the result is merely dogged and soggy melodrama. Mr Jeffers' verse continues to miss the virtues of prose and verse alike: it is capable neither of the fullness and modulation of fine prose nor of the concentration and modulation of fine verse. There is an endless, violent monotony of movement, wholly uninteresting and insensitive, that may have a hypnotic effect upon a good many readers, much as does the jolting of a railroad coach over a bad roadbed:

> After twenty miles he turned
> The carburetor-connection, slyly regarding
> His seat-mate, she fogged with misery observed nothing.
> The engine went lame. "What's the matter?" he said, turning
> The carburetor-connection. . . .

And again:

> Against the black horror of death
> All living miseries looked sweet; in a moment of aimless
> Wild anguish she was unable not to cry out. . . .

For brute clumsiness and emptiness such writing can hardly be equalled, and the second passage is a mosaic of stereotypes. Both passages are typical. The book is composed almost wholly of trash.

Mr Rodman is gently adventurous in his technique, and has done a good deal of experimenting with a kind of shuffling accentual meter which may stem back through free verse to Hopkins. It is loose, however, and its movements never have definite significance. Mr Rodman feels his material readily and with no particular distinction. Althea Bass is laborious and honest, but uninspired. Mr Dillon is feeble and saccharine, and, in some way hard to define, unwholesome.

IV. A Postscript

A chronicle of this sort usually passes, I suppose, as an indication of the good verse available; a moment's reflection will show that it

is really nothing of the sort. If the reader has stayed with me all the way to this postscript, it is because he has some vague curiosity about my opinion. Yet these books were sent me by Mr Kirstein, who, I imagine, selected rather well from what he had; and they were selected for Mr Kirstein by a number of publishers' readers, for the most part of no enormous abilities, and of names unknown to me. Six of the books I have reviewed were not worth printing, if considered as poetry. Mr Jeffers justifies himself to his publishers by selling; it is possible that Mr Dillon does likewise. But most books of poetry are published in the interests of art; the publishers really try to do the right thing.

They make a bad mess of it. Mr Grant H. Code is now in his thirties; he is one of the most distinguished poets living. Yet he has never published a book and he has published little otherwise. I quote one of his poems, obscurely published several years ago, entitled *Division*.

> Our severed thoughts crowd to accuse, despise;
> We step apart as if on tiptoe, hate
> Rapidly in great strides; yet, starlike, rise
> Even in winter when the sun has set.
>
> As multitudes of lamps that push their knives
> Into the dark become less keen at morn
> We melt our spiteful individual lives
> In one cool grey complacency of scorn.
>
> Our heavy separate spirits feed and sleep
> Indoors, until a gradual spring sets free
> New-living noisy flesh that step by step
> Draws near this wall, yet does not care to see,
>
> When acres of bright newborn land are spread
> With rapid mortal crocus lifting quickly,
> Slowly to fall disordered and afraid,
> The dark sun-shadows spread and circle quickly.

Mr Howard Baker, younger and a less varied metrist than Mr Code, is in some respects a sounder poet, though he has never written a finer poem than the one I have just quoted. Despite his having recently published one of the three or four most distinguished novels of the last ten or twelve years (*Orange Valley:* Coward McCann, 1931. $2.00) he remains, if anything, a more obscure figure than Mr Code. He possesses in his best moments and to a very high

degree most of the virtues that I recently attributed in these pages to Robert Bridges. Though not invariably a flawless stylist, he is one of the few securely classical talents in America. His best work is unpublished, and I am not at liberty to quote it, but I offer a sonnet published some years ago as obscurely as was the poem by Mr Code:

When I think that sometime I'll look on you
As I am looking now, and that those same
Dark lids will then be darker, and the blue
Eyes must stay hidden when I call your name;
Your curious lips now quick to draw my flame —
Then sealéd with a change I can't construe;
The sigh of sleep, your aura, is my fame —
Then sighless sleep untouchéd by my rue;

There are no terms to measure what I face:
A clear wall infinite in height and depth,
A level sea of cold unworldly breadth.
What savage runes are potent in this place?
What lover's kiss? O Death, your glassy sea
No firmer than her image is to me.

This restraint, intellectual competence, and intense quiet are not accidents in Mr Baker and Mr Code. They are ideals sought and understood (a very different matter) by at least a few of the younger writers. I quote from a recent issue of *The Commonweal* a poem as complete and unimpeachable in its way as the two above, by Mr J. V. Cunningham. It is called *Retreating Friendship:*

Our testament had read:
Affection is secure,
It is not forced or led.
No longer sure

Of hallowed certainty,
I have erased the mind:
As mendicants who see
Mimic the blind.

If these three poets could be published in some kind of bulk and given circulation, contemporary literature would be a great deal richer, and the cause of the contemporary intelligence would be notably strengthened. First-rate verse *is* being written here and there, in spite of what one sees in print.

YVOR WINTERS

PRINCIPLES OF SECESSION

ROBERT BARNWELL RHETT, FATHER OF SECESSION. *By Laura A. White, Ph.D. The Century Co.* 1932. $3.00. EDMUND RUFFIN, SOUTHERNER. *By Avery Craven, Ph.D. Appleton and Co.* 1932. $3.00.

IN THIS country which holds success in such great esteem it has been the invariable habit to enshroud failures in the wrapping of their causes and let the grave cover their rejection with its silence. Due to the complete crash of Confederate polity, fathers and defenders of secession have been relegated to a quicker oblivion than most American failures. There has rarely been a more complete defeat of an idea. It did not command, even, the respect of its proper mourners, who scrambled away from the burying with indecent haste, afterwards to vie with one another in ignoring the past and learning the ways of their conquerors.

A disinterested observer, viewing the whole performance, must have pondered on the hurried repudiation of the Confederacy and wondered at the savage anger its possible resurrection with the Ku Klux Klan aroused. He possibly would have surmised that the grave would not be the end; that ghosts, in spite of the fact that scientists have never seen one, persist in walking the air — especially above a troubled tomb. And so it is that, sixty-seven years after the event, the elegant Rhett and Edmund Ruffin are abroad and shaking their gory locks. It is more than accident that they

have returned to haunt the air when industrial leadership remains confused before approaching economic ruin and its consequent, social disorder.

Apart from the more specific ends of Miss White's and Mr. Craven's biographies, they have a very special importance for political economists. There is an uninterrupted congruity between the events which these two radicals helped to define and the present economic distress. Nor were Rhett and Ruffin lone prophets. They were supported by a goodly body of public men who raised a common complaint, the terms of which might have varied as the trouble grew more acute, but never the fundamental issue.

Briefly, this issue was the gain and maintenance of economic independence, the only permanent basis of liberty. The Western culture lost it on the breakdown of feudalism, and the mass of people were reduced to dependence upon those small groups who managed the monopolies. The American Revolution gave this part of the world a new start, but the common enemy gradually made a reappearance and, by destroying the Union and planting a central tyranny in its place, has at last reduced us to the condition from which our ancestors fled.

An oppressed people always has a better chance of uniting in resistance to a military tyranny. They have before them the violent, obvious facts of oppression. The dangerous form of tyranny is that which operates through legislation to deprive the people of their rights by degrees. Its danger, as John Taylor pointed out in 1822, is that its instruments work under the guise of free government. He warned the states of the Union, then predominantly agrarian, that they were substituting the domination of England for the domination of special interests at home; but his warning, if it was heard, was not acted upon. Those who favored consolidation, as they deprived the states of their sovereignty, made no concerted attack. They filched from one state, or group of states, at a time, arranging it so that the anger of the state immediately aggrieved would cool by the time another was aroused. New England fell first, where the ruin of the carrying trade by the embargoes turned capital into manufacturing. It was the question again of the concentrated impact of a mercenary army against the divided councils of the militia.

From this time on the fight to preserve the Union fell to Southern leaders. Some very special causes of their failure are exposed in Miss White's treatment of her subject. There was never much divergence of opinion among Southern politicians about the tariffs,

abolition, and secession, but there was the most bitter controversy over which procedure would be most expedient. Their inability to agree upon a plan of action soon enough was a contributing cause to the overthrow of their economy. This quarrel over policies divided the leaders into two parties, the Conservative and Radical, or Co-operationist and Separate-state-actionist. Calhoun dominated the first; Rhett fathered the second.

Calhoun hoped to control the Democratic party and through it preserve the Union and the South's place in it. When he failed in this, he attempted to get the Southern states to co-operate on some common action. His death in the spring of 1850 removed the chances for success, and the Nashville Convention which he had influenced met to come to no agreement.

Rhett foresaw this failure. Southern unity, he contended as early as 1828, could only be effected by the separate action of one state. He told his constituents and through them his political peers elsewhere that general colonial action against England was made possible only after the tea had been thrown into Boston harbor.

But Rhett, after his state's capitulation to Andrew Jackson's force bill, reluctantly abandoned his position to become Calhoun's chief lieutenant at Washington. But there was never any real agreement between them. Rhett's change of front was due to his belief that South Carolina's safety lay in Calhoun's camp. This gentleman, spending most of his life in Congress, was familiar with the theory that all free governments exist by compromises between conflicting interests. But Rhett understood, what seemed obscure to Calhoun, that there had never been any true compromise between the conflicting interests. A compromise means real concessions from each party; and from 1820 until 1860 the South steadily lost ground, receiving in return no definite gain, only promises that her "peculiar civilization" would be tolerated. Rhett saw promise after promise denied; but he continued in his allegiance to Calhoun until Calhoun acquiesced in the renunciation by the Democratic party of the twenty-first rule. At this he revolted. His revolt took courage, since no Carolinian had ever set up in opposition to the Nullifier without ruin. But since he was convinced that the slave states were lost if they remained in the Union, he risked this disobedience. Calhoun blocked the Bluffton movement, as it was called; but he could not break Rhett nor hinder the indoctrination of the young men with ideas of secession. It was these youths, Miss White points out, who made secession possible in 1861.

Of the two men Rhett was the greater realist. The continuation of Southern society was necessary to them both; but Calhoun's strong emotional attachment to the Union blinded him to the possibility that the South he loved could not control its destiny within it. Rhett was spared Calhoun's emotion. He was concerned with the continuation of Southern society under planter rule and not for a political combination per se. Unhampered by the ambitions and fears of the Co-operationists, both Rhett and Ruffin, with "the dignity of consistency between your words and actions," stood on unequivocal ground. They were not bothered over the right of secession, but over its benefits. Rhett was willing to call it a revolution.

His moment should have been 1851, when he was chosen for the vacated seat in the Senate. But he could not command the allegiance of his brother politicians as his successor had; and again South Carolina failed to act alone. Miss White conjectures that the South Carolina politicians had often chafed under Calhoun's dictation without daring to rebel openly. She believes that their jealousy of Rhett was partly due to his unchastened rebellion. Although Miss White does not make this conclusion, the thought suggests itself that Rhett, if he had never abandoned his open avowal of separate state action to follow Calhoun, might have developed a sufficient following to have had his way in 1851. It must be confessed, however, that Calhoun's power was so great in the state that it is doubtful whether a rival could have sustained a separate political life.

Rhett was at last vindicated when South Carolina withdrew alone and forced, as he had foretold, the other states to follow. But his triumph was brief. Direction of the Confederacy fell into the hands of the Co-operationists. The Radicals were discredited everywhere, and Rhett who expected the presidency was not even offered a place in the cabinet. Defeat never daunted him. He now turned upon these "Reconstructionists" who where using the Confederacy, he thought, as a political manœuvre to force the reconstruction of the Union on Southern terms. Davis's lack of a foreign policy and his defensive military campaigns did much to convince him of these suspicions. He carried on a bitter fight against "that little man Davis" until the end, watching without being able to prevent the ruin of his hopes.

Miss White has written a good book. She has presented her character with justice and detachment. She proves beyond a doubt her

thesis that he is the father of secession; she may raise his position to great importance in the history of this period. She has accomplished her purpose so well that one wishes she had attempted more. She has not chosen the happiest method to present so dramatic a figure. At the greatest moments of Rhett's career I feel the lack of the proper description of the scene. Her narrative at these points reads like the report of a battle: there were so many troops on the field, such and such a general commanded, made this move, advanced and retreated, finally lost the day; the casualties are so and so; such and such an individual behaved with gallantry.

A report of a battle gives a certain record of that event, but it ignores so many elements necessary to a complete understanding. It is true that Miss White did not pretend to do more than present her thesis, but her method has not interpreted the Father of Secession. There are missing links. I am told that Rhett was considered arrogant by his brother politicians. I want to see the quality of this arrogance. I want it defined. I want to see it at work in the conventions, in Congress, in debate. Perhaps the author's material was limited, but the reader must know enough about the protagonist's motives and personality to judge how far his character is responsible for events. Nevertheless, Miss White has written a distinguished biography. Her fault is that she did not write a great tragedy.

Hindrance to the prosperity of the older states of the South had another cause than the political domination of the manufacturing section. It was its system of farming, inherited from the Colonial period. This was a specialized farming, running first to tobacco and later to cotton. Where land was plentiful and population small, the planter cleared new ground instead of rebuilding his exhausted fields. This extravagant economy continued long after it should have been abandoned on account of the undeveloped western territory. However, a school of enlightened farmers, beginning with Washington, began experiments with better methods of cultivation in an effort to preserve their estates and stop emigration. The results were disheartening. Washington failed in practical results, and old John Taylor renewed the fight. He published his trials in the *Arator*. They were but partial improvements and interest again languished. In the meantime more and more fields were turned out to sage. It was at this time of gloom that Edmund Ruffin began experiments on his plantation at Coggin's Point which, complementary to all that had gone before, would establish the rudiments of a permanent system of farming. This is Ruffin's great claim to

distinction. If the Confederacy had succeeded, Ruffin's agricultural reform would undoubtedly have established it on the solid foundation of soil preservation and a general farming. One wonders why Mr. Craven does not make this implication, especially after the support given it by his excellent treatise, *Soil Exhaustion as a Factor in the Agricultural History of Virginia and Maryland, 1606–1860.*

Mr. Craven's biography is the first serious study of this long neglected figure, and he has chosen a style which flows more smoothly than Miss White's. Unlike Miss White he has not limited himself to a special phase of his subject's activity. He has drawn a more complete portrait; or rather, he has developed different poses which are carefully labelled under the chapter headings. He recreates Ruffin as the young agricultural enthusiast, studying his depleted soils that he might not abandon his Virginia home (and later that others might not abandon theirs); facing the ridicule of his neighbors until he had seen a great agricultural reform get well under way; fighting the banks and their paper notes; leaving an unappreciative Virginia to plant his theories in South Carolina at the invitation of the governor; becoming a Southern Nationalist and studying the Pro-slavery arguments to find a proper defense for his culture; mastering the different methods of propaganda to stimulate resistance to Northern oppression; joining the ranks with young boys when secession was accomplished and firing the first gun against Sumter; attempting at Manassas to keep step beyond his strength; and finally after the collapse of his Nation, his logic carried to its conclusion, he took his own life, after leaving this parting thrust in his diary: "I here repeat and would willingly proclaim my unmitigated hatred to Yankee rule — to all political, social and business connections with Yankees, and the perfidious, malignant and vile Yankee race."

Mr. Craven has succeeded in leaving the illusion of an actual character. His approach to Ruffin and his culture is too much that of a collector of antiques for him to be concerned with his contemporary importance, although he notices that Ruffin's comparison between Northern and Southern agriculture, his estimation of socialism and pauper slavery is that of advanced modern criticism, even to its vocabulary. This attitude is sympathetic to that of the Manifest Destiny school of opinion and inhibits a proper appreciation of the Southern radical movement. He speaks of Ruffin and the new-born nation as sowing the wind. It seems more just, in view

of our present predicament, to conclude that the wind was sown after the new nation's downfall; and that it was the radicals who struggled to erect a windbreak against the tornado.

It must be said for their agrarian culture that it produced in its planter rulers a class of men who understood their polity and the dangers which threatened its safety, and this cannot be said of industrial masters. This understanding and the astute predictions of the condition to which their society would be reduced by their failure to maintain it gave to their radicalism at the time an evil connotation and to their prophecies a wild unreality.

Calhoun argued that the freedom of the negro would reduce both classes to slavery, and anyone familiar with present relations between the tenant farmer and his landlord will not deny this. Each class in its fight for self-preservation has developed an elaborate practice of oppression, with the added harm that the once independent yeomanry finds itself caught by the same set of circumstances. The South is driven, along with the rest of the country, by the unknown course of industrial winds.

What the end will be nobody now can say. We are beyond prediction. But the way out is certainly not that of the school which believes in the American superstition that an idea must be inherently bad because its followers were once unable to maintain it in action. Its belief in Communism and other militant forms of consolidated control is a philosophy of despair, or the last refinement of opportunism. These lives of Rhett and Ruffin, on the contrary, direct us how leaders should act in an approaching crisis. They should also offer a program: the revival of some form of agrarianism. If it is too late for this, they cannot be deprived of the alternate rôle, the tragic chorus warning this generation that the downfall of most great cultures was preceded by the loss of that personal attachment to the land which, if it is not already gone, is fast disappearing in this nation.

Andrew Nelson Lytle

A FRENCH CATHOLIC QUARTERLY

VIGILE, QUATRE CAHIERS, 1930. *Volume* I. *Grasset, Paris.*

A PERIODICAL which can include among its contributors the names of Paul Claudel, Jacques Maritain, René Schwob, François Mauriac, Charles du Bos, Venceslas Ivanov, and G. K. Chesterton, is not to be read as ordinary ephemeral literature. *Vigile* in both form and content resembles a series of "studies" rather than a current periodical. It is printed on fine paper and in handsome type; there is no advertising; no editor is named. There is great variety of material, and it is all of a high order of workmanship. In this first year of the quarterly, articles on religion, music, painting, and literature appear along with letters, short stories, dialogues, and "pensées." But, in spite of the diversity of subject matter, there is a unity of point of view.

We quote the pithy statement "to the reader": "Le catholicisme n'étant à aucun degré un parti, *Vigile* n'a pas de programme — sinon d'offrir à quelques écrivains catholiques tant étrangers que français le lieu de rencontre où ils puissent collaborer en parfaite communauté de foi, selon le mode d'expression propre à chacun d'eux." The reader is reminded of the little group called Plymouth Brethren (so well described in Sir Edmund Gosse's *Father and Son*), who also believe that they only are truly Christian, and, therefore, they only are not a sect. If we judge the meaning of these words "to the reader" by the contents of *Vigile*, we may infer that the contributors wish to detach themselves from all parties within the Church or the nation. They will offer here no *direct* arguments for the Faith; they will make no plea for Thomism; they will make no attack on Protestantism. They will collaborate in the perfect community of a Faith which, they contend, is in no way sectarian. Certainly a program, and, in some respects, a commendable program. It ought to be obvious, however, that if Catholicism were not a party, these men would not desire to collaborate or they would find collaboration impossible. But party or no party, these writers are partisan. In the main, they confine their attention to what may be associated

with Catholicism. *Catholic* thought and art are discussed. The poetry found here is *Catholic* poetry. The literary and art criticism is, in general, *Catholic* criticism. Hence, we may find in these few words "to the reader" the explanation of both the excellence and the defect of *Vigile:* It achieves a singular concentration and unity, but it suffers from a peculiar exclusiveness and narrowness of range.

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The contributions on religion are the best. They are redolent of that old world piety which the Catholic Church still does most to maintain. There being no attempt to refute heresy in these pages, we find a seasoned and sensitive appreciation of the universal elements in religion. It would be difficult, for example, to find anything of its kind better than the letter which Paul Claudel wrote to the patients under the care of l'Association Catholique des Malades of Berck. M. Claudel does not try to make his task easy but directs the letter to those "chez qui [la maladie] est une *vocation*, une conversion définitive de toute la nature." There is here none of the facile consolation so easily rolled off the tongue of the healthy man when speaking to the invalid. As we read, we are reminded of the older (and truer) meaning of the word comfort:

"Ainsi l'homme qui souffre n'est pas inutile et oisif. Il travaille et il acquiert par sa collaboration avec la main bienfaisante et cruelle qui est à l'oeuvre sur lui, non pas des biens périssables et relatifs, mais des valeurs absolues et universelles dont il a la disposition. . . . Chose merveilleuse! son travail est d'être travaillé, c'est lui-même qui fournit la matière d'une élaboration mystérieuse, c'est son âme qui subit l'opération de mains aussi savantes et délicates que celles d'un artiste ou d'un créateur. . . .

"C'est la cause qui nous a faits qui n'est pas contente de son ouvrage et qui le reprend et qui nous oblige à nous apercevoir d'elle. Le Malade et le Saint, c'est quelqu'un que Dieu ne laisse pas tranquille. Un rythme nouveau intervient dans l'engrenage automatique de nos effets et de nos causes, nous frottons, un accident intérieur s'est produit, un doigt s'est introduit qui engourdit et qui pince et qui nous oblige à quelque chose de différent comme marche et comme accommodation."

Equally sane and discerning is a dialogue on religious meditation drawn from the *Instructions spirituelles* of an eighteenth century Jesuit, P. Caussade, a disciple of Bossuet. We hear the echoes of seventeenth century "devout humanism" in such a conversation as this one on the two rules for meditation:

Demande: Quelle est la première règle?

Réponse: C'est d'aller lentement, doucement, parole à parole, soit vocale, soit intérieure.

Demande: Quelle est la seconde règle?

Réponse: "C'est d'interrompre le discours par intervalles pour la présence de Dieu," comme parle Bossuet après le P. Balthazar; ou selon d'autres, c'est d'interrompre le discours par des pauses attentives pour écouter Dieu, après lui avoir parlé.

Demande: Pourquoi faut-il observer la première règle?

Réponse: Pour éviter tout effort, toute contention d'esprit nuisible même à l'oraison: car c'est une maxime reçue que toute oraison qui fait mal à la tête, n'est guère bonne, puisque ce doit être l'ouvrage du coeur bien plus que de l'esprit, et d'un coeur qui parle avec une confiance filiale à celui que Jésus-Christ nous ordonne d'appeler notre père dès le commencement de l'oraison.

Demande: S'il faut prier si lentement, si doucement, que deviendra la ferveur?

Réponse: Ce qu'on appelle de ce nom, n'est bien souvent qu'une ardeur de sang et d'imagination ou pure activité naturelle, toute propre à troubler les opérations du Saint-Esprit, en troublant cette paix intérieure, sans laquelle il n'opère d'ordinaire que bien faiblement.

M. Jacques Maritain has so often in his writings referred to St. John of the Cross that it is of unusual interest to find here a systematic exposition of his ideas. After reading M. Maritain's devastating attacks on "pure spirituality" and Protestant claustrophobia[1] in *Trois Réformateurs*, we have wondered how *Catholic* mysticism would manage to escape judgment. Mysticism, Protestant or Catholic, is always in danger of regarding the means which the church furnishes for uniting God and man as "intermediary," as separating God from man. Common sense, as well as tradition, demands that mysticism be always aware of the need for the mediators, Christ and the church. When these are abandoned, yearning for the infinite and "creative" symbolism are not far off. With difficulties of this sort, it is not surprising that we rarely find a critic who can write about mysticism without becoming either confused or confusing. M. Maritain has already shown himself *able* to make the necessary distinctions and reservations. But what do we get here? Little more than simple exposition and adulation. This reviewer has too great a respect for M. Maritain's erudition to affirm that he is confused. Yet, in this essay on St. John of the

[1] A word coined some years ago by Father Knox to describe the breaking away from institutional religions and the creeds by which institutional religions live.

Cross, M. Maritain contemplates with undoubted admiration and without a murmur of protest, a nihilism and a pure spirituality beyond which no "Neoplatonic road" ever stretched. Is it against the rules of *Vigile* to criticize a saint?

"*Rien, rien, rien, rien, rien,* c'est le sentier de Jean de la Croix." Hence, not only the institution goes, but also reason and the senses and all that is finite. "Nothing but the infinite can satisfy us," says St. John. Here we have the very ideas that have made mysticism so fruitful of nonsense and heresy. But we need not trust our own strength in order to recover our balance. The Catholic scholar Baron Friedrich von Hügel, in his posthumously published Gifford Lectures, tries to save St. John from anathema by contending that alongside this anti-institutional teaching "we have the other strain of the Incarnational outlook; and, again, there are other places in which he feels himself pulled up by this or that Church ordinance and practice . . . and then he makes his peace with this ordinance as quickly as he can, so as to get back to what he really understands and what he spontaneously loves, the purely spiritual means of union, the purely spiritual God." Baron von Hügel keeps the saint within the fold, however, by insisting that he is "in practice and, indeed, in his temper of mind, taken as a whole, deeply Christian and entirely Catholic." But, in spite of his attempt to deal with St. John "as a whole," he is willing to admit: "And yet, I do not see how these epithets [deeply Christian and entirely Catholic] could be claimed for the purely spiritual current in his teaching." [2] Baron von Hügel links *even* Martin Luther with St. John of the Cross as one who was misled by the un-Catholic desire for pure spirituality. M. Maritain's study, then, is at least confusing, for what he condemns in Luther and Descartes he condones in St. John of the Cross. He should have lifted some pages from his telling attacks on "angelism" (the term which he coined for the vice of pure spirituality) in *Trois Réformateurs* and included them in this essay. He would not then have concealed the glaring inconsistency between the mysticism that says: "Nothing but the infinite can satisfy us" and institutional Catholicism that operates on the principle: salus extra ecclesiam non est. Apparently, the critical faculties are useful even when dealing with a saint. The Catholic who wishes to study mysticism would do well to keep open in front of him a copy of Bernard's homilies on the Song of Solomon (an influential docu-

[2] Friedrich von Hügel, *The Reality of God,* pp. 140–1.

ment in the history of mysticism, too, for that matter), simply to remind him that the Church and not the individual is the Bride of Christ.

Of the other articles on religion, special mention should be made of M. Claudel's stimulating dialogue comparing the civilizations of the Orient and the Occident. A lively combat of ideas is to be found in the letters that passed between the Catholic Venceslas Ivanov and the Russian nihilist M.-O. Gerschenson while convalescing in different corners of the same ward of a hospital, during the Bolshevik revolution. Most interesting, perhaps, to English and American readers are the valuable expositions of the ideas of Paul Claudel by Jacques Madaule and of those of Peter Wust by Gabriel Marcel. Translations of Coventry Patmore, Maurice Baring, and G. K. Chesterton are also included.

Turning to the essays on literature, we find Flaubert and Molière discussed in separate essays by M. François Mauriac. Molière is depicted as the sad, sensual, disillusioned man of the world who relied on instinct rather than grace. Being entirely rooted in nature and the life of the senses, Molière's only criterion was his sense of the ridiculous. Not that he should have been an ascetic like Pascal; but a gentleman, says M. Mauriac, can hold "the moderate way between the licentiousness of Molière and the excesses of Pascal." The writer also sees great danger in the use of satire against religion: it is as effective against the true piety as against the false. (A reflection that occurs also to the reader of *Lettres Provinciales*.) When M. Mauriac finds that Molière was aware of the baseness of life without being aware of its grandeur, he makes an observation that may be applied to his own novels. Mauriac is as specialized as Molière. This fact is not altered by his well-known explanation of his own method: "To describe the man of today in all his misery is to uncover the abyss which the absence of God has made to gap in our world." We happen to know that M. Mauriac is himself a devout Catholic and that Molière was not. But so far as their literary output is concerned, it might be maintained that they are of about the same value, if we apply M. Mauriac's principles. There is, of course, a very limited value in such a strictly ethical criticism.

The study of Flaubert is also Catholic, and not literary, criticism. Flaubert is called a "literary saint," a man who renounced the world for the sake of art. He read ethics, philosophy, science, theology, and history, not for the nourishment of his own mind, but

only to stuff the minds of his characters. While Molière's criterion was a sense of the ridiculous, Flaubert's was whim. He loved those who throw themselves into extremes. The main trouble was that he was lacking in love, and style could not compensate for that deficiency.

A good deal of space is devoted to a study "Du *spirituel* dans l'ordre littéraire" by Charles du Bos. The essay sets out with great promise by making this distinction: "Le *spirituel* nous soulève, nous enlève, le *sublime* nous transporte. Seulement, entre les deux il subsiste cette différence que le sublime est plutôt un *climat*, le spirituel plutôt une *ouverture*. . . . L'écrivain sublime *a* du souffle et l'écrivain spirituel *est* un souffle." Sometimes, we are told, these two qualities are united in a kind of alternating movement, as in *Polyeucte*, and at other times in a perfect fusion or ambivalence, as in *The Divine Comedy*. There is an extended discussion of Milton, the best example of the sublime without the "spirituel," and of Shelley, who represents the "spirituel" but not the sublime. M. du Bos is an industrious reader and is familiar with the men he writes about, but the study as a whole is disappointing. He yields too often to the temptation to digress, and the study becomes a suggestive but a somewhat formless document. When the reader has finished, he is still waiting for a genuine analysis of the "spirituel" and the sublime. We notice in this study a defect common to many of the contributors of *Vigile*. There is very little reference to the work of other critics who have dealt with the problems in hand. Surely some of the discussions of literary inspiration and the sublime are worth referring to. An attempt at integration would have helped both writer and reader.

Of the essays on the fine arts, the most ambitious is a study of Delacroix by M. François Fosca. Special attention is given to the religious paintings, and the writer believes that, in spite of a limited religious insight and desultory religious practices, Delacroix must be granted high rank as a religious painter. M. Fosca allows himself the luxury of "placing" Delacroix. Although he thinks rightly that Delacroix is not to be called a romantic merely because he revolted against David and academicism, and although he reminds us that Delacroix learned much from Raphael and Poussin and was not in sympathy with the revolutionary romantics, he only vaguely "places" his man by ranking him with "the great classic painters," Raphael, Rubens, and Tintoretto. "If you like a painter, call him classic, and if you don't, call him romantic," seems to be the

formula. The reader is only tantalized by a reference to the "absurd antithesis" which would make line or design in painting chaste, noble, ideal, and of intellectual appeal, and color base, gross, and touching only the senses. We could not complain if the critic had attempted a definition of terms and then failed. But we ought to be told what is meant by classic and romantic in painting if it is so important that Delacroix be accounted a classic and not a romantic. The same errors are at work here as in some of the literary criticism in *Vigile*. The critic has not taken the trouble to integrate his "criticism" with the available material on the subject. Furthermore, Delacroix the man is made to overshadow the painter. The fact that Delacroix's notebooks indicate his appreciation of the Church, and the fact that he painted religious subjects with an understanding of the universal sentiments of religion, should not be given more weight than the real question at issue, namely, his artistic credo. And his artistic credo was individualism. But what could a *Catholic* critic do with an individualist?

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Thoreau once resigned from the United States. So far as *Vigile* is concerned, most of the contributors have excommunicated themselves from the republic of letters. They are so anxious to believe that Catholicism is not a sect that they ignore those who do not belong. Presumably, they do this in order to avoid controversy. But they neglect the secular treatment of art, and they prefer to discover art in Catholic channels and by the use of Catholic instruments only. There is little attempt to build up a generally recognized body of opinion by dealing openly with already existing and prevalent opinion. By this exclusiveness, these men show that Catholicism is in reality a party and that the mode of expression proper to each of them is necessarily restricted. Writing for each other and about each other is proper only for sectarians. There is much to be said for accepting limitations, but not when those limitations constitute only a systematized provincialism.

But not only the republic of letters is left unrecognized. There is nothing of the world of affairs in *Vigile*. An odor of the cloister comes from these pages. We feel the need for what William James wanted after a week spent in the protected and serene atmosphere of Chautauqua. We wish to get back to the world, where there is something "primordial and savage to set the balance straight again." It would be untrue to say that *Vigile* represents an escape

from life. Instead, we should say it has not taken in enough of life. The "clerc" should fear "le trahison" through indifference as well as through the kiss.

And now to speak of the merits rather than the defects. *Vigile* maintains a remarkably high standard throughout in matters of taste and workmanship. The contributors are a carefully selected group and there is never a suggestion of journalism or of the methods of current periodical literature. In fact, one senses a deliberate attempt to make the reader conscious of the broad culture of cosmopolitan Catholicism. This method (one that has long been used by the Ultramontanists) is not without warrant in the history of the Church. We recall that St. Augustine was first attracted to Ambrose of Milan not by his exposition of the truth of Christianity, but rather by the "sweetness of his discourse."

The outstanding quality of *Vigile*, however, is something that may be attributed directly to Catholicism. *Vigile* avoids what M. Mauriac and all Catholics regard as the vice of the age: "There are as many verities as individuals." Ordinarily, when a group of men are invited to express themselves each in his own way, we look for a kind of Tower of Babel, where some form of glossolalia is to be accepted as the guarantee of sincerity. But here the "level of presupposition" is high. To these writers we may apply what W. C. Brownell wrote of the French social instinct: "There is, of course, differentiation enough, but it begins further along than with us, and is structural rather than fortuitous." The entire group accepts a socialized experience of religion, a divine authority, a system of metaphysics, and an organized institution with its rites and offices. Consequently, there is no sign of suddenly acquired enthusiasms, no futile eccentricities, not even heresy hunting. The reader knows what to expect in taste and in general attitudes, and he finds it.

Venceslas Ivanov in one of his letters to the Russian nihilist, M.-O. Gerschenson, verbalizes the formative principle which may be discerned in almost every page of *Vigile:* Je suis persuadé que pas un seul degré de l'ascension spirituelle ne peut être franchi, sans une descente vers les richesses souterraines: plus les branches s'élancent haut vers le ciel, plus profondes s'enfoncent les racines." We might say that the peculiar merits and defects of *Vigile* grow out of the special application which Catholicism makes of a basic principle of life: By their *roots* you shall know them.

James Luther Adams

THE GRAND MANNER IN CONTEMPORARY LINTEL CONSTRUCTION

THE INTERNATIONAL STYLE ARCHITECTURE SINCE 1922. *By Henry-Russell Hitchcock, Jr., and Philip Johnson. W. W. Norton and Co., Inc., N. Y.* $5.00.

MODERN ARCHITECTS. *A Catalogue of the International Exhibition. New York, February 10 to March 23, 1932. Museum of Modern Art. By Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Philip Johnson, Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Lewis Mumford.* $3.00.

ARCHITECTURE is a simple subject matter, requiring in a critic not so much largeness as acuteness of mind; yet Hitchcock-Johnson, with all the enthusiasm of a zealous evangelical, takes such pleasure in any idea at all connected with architecture that he overstates it, not knowing that an over-statement contains within itself its contradiction.

And, like the writers of telephone or insurance advertisements, he brings more ideas to play upon his subject than is necessary, presenting in his book and catalogue, together with essential and extraneous statements many ideas that are equal and opposite to one another. Thus, while the book dismisses the Renaissance as "a surface change of style generally coupled with actual regression in terms of structure," the catalogue rightly praises it as a mysterious advance in the planning and enclosing of great spaces. The praise is more pertinent than the dismissal, for modern architecture takes a great leap beyond the Renaissance advance. As an historical and technical document, the book is inferior to Hitchcock-Johnson's text in the catalogue of the Exhibition of Architecture held in New York at the Museum of Modern Art wherein he covers the same ground with scrupulous historic truthfulness and graceful ability. While everyone who read the catalogue would know that it is addressed to him, everyone who read the book would think that it must have been written for someone of less intelligence. Some illustrations are common to both book and catalogue, but the book contains more. Although both have plans, both are lacking in sections (essential to the appreciation of architecture) and both are

lacking in scholarly publication of engineering works (the basis of architectural practice). But everywhere the catalogue is to go with the Exhibition, in the projected three years' tour of the United States, it will carry with it a quiet enthusiasm as it gives out information with the appropriately accompanying ideas to persons who wish to be informed of contemporary European progress in architecture.

In book and catalogue together, the inventive character of Miës van der Rohe's use of walls as screens, with its enormous implications for plan and for ornament, is contrasted with the differing plastic importance of Le Corbusier, a maker of gigantic toys who playfully humanizes the forms of machines. But Oud, whose work is analogous to our suburban picturesqueness, is preferred to Gropius and the Functionalists whose works are in direct bearing upon American monumental engineering. The manners of these four European architects are based upon an intelligent use of building materials which have undergone great development at the hands of American engineers. It is unthinkable that American architecture will not fall into line with this progress. The Exhibition is aimed to further this end. But no one, except the blindest enthusiast, could fail to see that the reflections of European progress as presented in the executed American International architectural designs, impede rather than further this aesthetic destiny.

America's architectural destiny would be delayed by a general conversion to the "International Style," for many of the most pleasing aspects of that style are virtues which we ourselves have already found to have been mistaken. Its color amounts to little more than our 1890 usage, its entourage to a weakening of the weak aesthetic of the elder Olmsted, its plan for the dwelling is an exaggeration of our unwise open plan of the '80's and '90's. As intolerable to the infantile aggregations of the poor as it is unseemly for the adult congregation of the rich, it is fit only for the barbarous exigencies of the middling apartment dwellers, and even so is less wise in America, where climate and manners are rough, than in Europe, where both are more gentle. The houses and projects of wealthy Europeans are of use chiefly as laboratory experiments towards public architecture and communal housing, but in color, plan and landscape, the current European mannerisms are retrograde American imitations. Hitchcock-Johnson publishes American imitations of these imitations in order to round out the mental picture he briefly sketched by his word "international."

In its three years' tour, the Exhibition could gather together choice examples of American engineering and throw out its examples of American architecture. This truth, leading to the useful question: "Is this architecture?" would do more to further common taste and sense than any dialectic. The dialectic of the "International Style" is typical of the talk which, in this country as in England, takes the place of unverbal plastic conviction. It exalts the characteristics of the latest phase of European architecture into all-compelling laws, — not laws which can be observed to happen, but laws which should be obeyed in practice. This dialectic has three principles: (1) Proscription of arbitrarily applied decoration. (2) Design by regularity rather than by axial symmetry. (3) Accentuation of volume rather than mass. Accurate when they are presented as fashion reports, these principles break down when they are expounded as doctrines. No architecture has ever been conceived of, excepting by fools, as anything but volume. Nobody thought of any buildings as mass, unless they were commemorative monuments, pyramids, obelisks, sphinxes and columns, but Hitchcock-Johnson makes a dialectic principle of the fact that most good designers nowadays emphasize the surface or envelope of the space which they enclose. Hitchcock-Johnson says that "the breaking of wall spaces by placing windows at the inner instead of the outer edge of the wall is a serious fault in design," because the general principle should be that of emphasizing the surfaces whether they are opaque or translucent. But this may be so only if you design from the outside rather than from the inside.

Equally pretentious as dialectic is Regularity as an opponent to axial Symmetry, and the Proscription of arbitrarily applied Decoration. Of course axial symmetry has its uses. Of course regularity is more straightforward than willful picturesqueness. Hitchcock-Johnson decrees: "Mural painting should not break the wall surface unnecessarily." The "unnecessarily" lets Hitchcock-Johnson out and all great mural decoration in. He tells us that "patently artificial color makes too sharp a contrast with natural surroundings." Has he never seen the Azores? Nor what the Portuguese do to New England farmhouses? Patently artificial, too sharp a contrast, indeed! As for the natural surroundings, we are told: "Terraces may extend outside the boundaries of the house." Thanks! "But beyond the terraces the reign of nature should clearly begin." Why begin? Should not rather the reign of nature increasingly diminish the nearer one approaches the house? "The

elaborate formal garden has no place in connection with the International Style." The style indicated nothing more clearly than the necessity of formal landscape plan.

The doctrinaire talk which has been spilled out by American aestheticians since the time of Godey's *Lady's Book:* "This should be thus but that should not, let it be blank without being blanketty, this is good but that is bad" discourages designers of strong personal sense; only in such individuals does any hope reside. Only those people who are themselves disorganized would anticipate any good from Hitchcock-Johnson's repellent talk about the need for discipline in artists. Discipline be damned! What architects need is enthusiasm for contemporary building materials. These contain in their natures all necessary aesthetic discipline. It is propagandists who need moral discipline. Too often they injure causes they espouse because they are urged on less by enthusiasm for these causes than by the desire to make themselves out to be of great authority in the world. Aesthetes are of all men most prone to sin against the Holy Ghost by embarrassing those whom they would encourage. Today when all walls can be mere screens, architecture is crying out for just and tactful ornamental devices. But should men of requisite ability rise on these shores, they would find the faces of patrons turned against them towards the fashionable notion that the urinal is more international than the tootsy-wootsy cottage. This, alas! is not the fact.

Let the architect beware. Hitchcock-Johnson is making trouble for him, though his intention is more enlightened than the architect's may be. With what inexperience does Hitchcock-Johnson feel able to say: "The man who is about to build a house knows his needs and can be forced to discover them by analysis"? It is a century-old fact that the opposite is the rule, and for his sad state, architectural critics are to blame. They have made the everyday man think that they have put ideas into his head which never really got there because, wisely but half-heartedly, he resisted them.

On the eve of the American propaganda in its favor, the "cause" in Europe has entered upon playful exuberance. Let us therefore hasten now to be austere in order that years from now we may not be deprived of the thrill of another propagandist flurry. Let us make speed. Modern concrete architecture is analogous to the Byzantine; but as we cannot speak of a universal lintel style, if we speak of it, let us ignore it. Contemporary lintel construction

is analogous to no historic forms but the Chinese. Let us therefore compare it to the Gothic and take more wind out of Dr. Cram's sails. Let us make haste. People in this country ride about in close motors, — here architects are business men. Nobody seems to care much about anything. They have to be scolded to be made to care. The American public has been scolded by school-teachers and critics for so long that it has to read about beauty and ugliness before it can distinguish between them. The public likes the word "new". Give it to them, even as the American publisher of Le Corbusier's *Vers une Architecture* sentimentalized the title into *Towards a New Architecture*. Say that the century-old structural use of metal is outside the art of architecture. That will make contemporary architecture seem very new indeed, and *presto-chango* architecture becomes volume!

Dismiss Wright, patronize him. Call him an old man. He is old; the style is new; see? The public prefers names to the anonymous definitions of words; let us invent names for things. Baptize baby before he is born. Give him a trade name.

Any savage thinks that if he has the name he has the thing, and knows that if he has a false name, he has only the thing's ghost. Names are sacred, we should fear them. One who has made false names current, must waste time explaining them away. What to mean and what not to mean by the term "International Style?" It means only, "Everybody's doing it, doing it. Doing what?"

What indeed, if not what Frank Lloyd Wright has done by performance and by emulated example for a whole generation? The manners of Wright, however erratic, are vital inspirations for American designers. What indeed if not to intensify and refine, as Gropius does, the thousand city-fulls of monumental engineering; most monumental and most nearly beautiful as they are in the cities of the United States? American architects are to be forever disgraced in our annals because the implications of this engineering were not brought first to common beauty here and now. The American style is still implied in American engineering.

"O God, more sales resistance" be our prayer as we examine some of Hitchcock-Johnson's illustrations of the architecture in America which he prefers to American engineering: Clauss and Daub's Standardized Filling Stations leave nothing to be desired except that they can never hold their own against dump heaps, locomotives and bill boards. This is just what American engineering and European modern architecture does do.

Neutra, like many another European immigrant to America, does not seem to improve his work the longer he stays here. When he was at home, he was not among the best. The Lovell House is chaotic in design. Such a large proportion of glass seems ill-advised for the Los Angeles climate.

Howe and Lescaze's early and superficial work, Oak Lane Country Day School, is their best. Their Philadelphia Savings Fund Building departs from architecture rather than approaching it. Even when completed it will look always as though several buildings were simultaneously in progress of being put up and pulled down. Mr. Harold Sterner has ably criticized their housing project in the HOUND AND HORN for Spring, 1932.

The McGraw-Hill Building is an expressionist monument; that is to say, it expresses the purpose and structure of the building less than it expresses the character of Raymond Hood, the designer, who often hints, roguishly, as though he feared no one would take his word: "I have no aesthetic convictions. I am business-like (in the American sense) and I am undistracted by any of those considerations which I call idealistic." There was needed no further adverse criticism of the Daily News Building after what Mr. Weber said of it in the HOUND AND HORN (Volume IV, no. 2, p. 270) except what Mr. Hood himself added by way of defense. In external design, his Beaux Arts Apartments are the Daily News Building turned on its side. His project for apartment towers in the country should be greeted with enthusiastic prohibition. Ten buildings, we are told, would rise where one hundred now stand. This would be almost heaven. But we know well what Real Estate speculators would turn it into.

Kocher and Frey in the Harrison house combine more mistakes than one would think possible to so small a space, and disregard the commonplaces of American fitness in plan while they ape many experimental affectations of the Europeans. Even President Lowell's recent Harvard housing development is no uglier.

Bowman Brothers' metallic and vitreous project for the Lux Apartments is reactionary in plan, unreasonable in its use of glass and the cantilever. As in the case of the project for the pre-fabricated house, the controlling idea would be appropriate only to a blind asylum for exhibitionists.

Although Frank Lloyd Wright's Jones house in Tulsa may be the worst example of scale in America (which is saying much), in his projected House on the Mesa he gathers into one compass the

bewilderingly various virtues of his lifetime in forms which are equally enjoyable when they are exuberant and where they are restrained. Alone among American architects, whether in his Germanic flight of fancy or in his Mediterranean austerity, Wright is governed by his enthusiasm for an architecture to house the human mind. He is still ahead of European fashion, and fashionable Americans are, as usual, scared. In defense of this fear, Hitchcock-Johnson put forth a strange argument as though to found some sort of Club: "The case against individualism in architecture lies in the fact that Wright has been almost alone in America in achieving a distinguished architecture, while in Europe, and indeed in other parts of the world as well, an increasingly large group of architects work successfully within the disciplines of the new style." One would suppose this to be a strong case for individualism that Wright alone has been distinguished in America while no other architect in America stands alone. Hitchcock-Johnson expresses this rather sweetly when he says: "But if architecture is still to be an art, great architects must be free to go forth upon new paths of design." This is the enthusiastic microbe which sickens artistic discipline. There is a cry nowadays for intellectual group action because our sensitive thinkers who feel that the institution of American individualism is outworn, apply the moral (as they are sensitive) to themselves. Something has clearly gone awry with a good idea, for if people with imagination do not remain individuals, there can be no hope for the others. Intellectuals need not form societies in order to provide society with art. Group action is a political medium. Organized groups of intellectuals are Chambers of Commerce disguised. When people in any particular region think of themselves as taking part in a world "cause" they involuntarily dissipate their individual local effort and lean upon the progress of the "cause."

The germ of this new style was apparent to clear-sighted observers 80 years ago. Its development has never broken. The long desire for Style itself, in distinction to the Styles, is realized. This has deep meaning only for artists and for men of taste. There is a deeper meaning with implications as wide as the human mind is wide, in the fact that the age-long struggle of mankind to enclose monumental space with ease and to provide all of its members with delightful shelter is technically attained. Modern architecture has finished its experimental stage. The vastly more interesting stage of individual application lies ahead.

JOHN WHEELWRIGHT

BERENSON'S CONTRIBUTION

ITALIAN PICTURES OF THE RENAISSANCE.—A list of the principal artists and their works with an index of places. *By Bernhard Berenson. Oxford University Press.* 1932. $4.50

"WHAT meagre results for the task of a lifetime! Yes, had it been a task. But it has been a way of living." So Mr. Berenson closes the introduction to his "Italian Pictures of the Renaissance." There is in these lines a sigh, almost imperceptible to one who does not know what gifts have been lavished upon this small book. About thirty-five years ago four volumes on Renaissance Paintings appeared, each one an octo of a little over a hundred pages of text, and at the end of each book a list of pictures, more correctly attributed by a new method of connoisseurship, which the reader might study during his travels as an illustration to the author's remarks. Now that the plan underlying these books has been completed, it might be useful to reconsider the purpose for which they were published, particularly as that purpose has been obscured by the exaggerated importance given to the cataloguing and attributing of paintings.

The lists of pictures at the end of each volume were not intended in the first place as a catalogue of Renaissance Painting. Instead they were an integral part of the whole plan of the books; a plan

that supposed a mutual relation between the essays and the lists. Had the authorship of various Renaissance Paintings not become confused, had each artistic personality remained circumscribed within its true form, then the lists would have attracted less attention, though they would have been by no means less essential to the purpose of the books. But this purpose was warped and contorted to fit a new game that Mr. Berenson's lists and the preceding labor of Morelli and Crowe and Cavalcaselle began — the Game of Attributions. Dilettantes, who felt themselves superior to Anagrams, delighted in it, fitting this picture into the word Botticelli, that picture into the word Duccio. And sadly enough, Mr. Berenson's attributions began to be studied as the classic example of the new game.

The lists, however, had a more serious purpose, or, we feel sure, they would never have been made. What Mr. Berenson wished to do was to give in skeleton form the chief "Artistic Personalities" of Renaissance Painting, and the essays at the beginning of each volume were intended to explain and analyze the particular effect these "Artistic Personalities" could produce on a trained observer. It may not be quite clear what is meant by the words "Artistic Personality." On the title page of the early editions of Hobbes' "Leviathan" there is an engraving of the Commonwealth. It shows innumerable small men forming together the figure of a Giant. If one substitutes pictures, or pictorial designs, for men, one gains some idea of what is meant by a term, itself as abstract as the word Commonwealth. Each of these "Artistic Personalities" can bestow certain gifts, which it is the purpose of connoisseurship to discern.

There is, also, running through the composite form that arises out of the complete work of an artist, as blood runs through the body, an element which we might call style. As our own blood is qualified by our inheritance, so it is with artistic styles. At the beginning of each list of pictures Mr. Berenson has stated the progenitors of the style in which they are painted. Pictures resemble their artistic origins as a child resembles its parents; but sometimes, as the parentage of a child is a little ambiguous, so the origins of a particular style of painting are not always certain, and in this respect the present lists show numerous changes from the earlier books.

But the first volumes lacked one important factor in the new impersonal approach to the study of Painters. The pictures were

not dated, partly because in what now seems the Dark Ages of Art Criticism, documents had not been fully examined, and partly because the morphology of the various styles was unknown. But Mr. Berenson in the present lists has tried, either by dating the works when they are documented, or by marking them "early" or "late" on stylistic grounds, to make the development of the artist clear to anyone with the leisure to compare the various pictures.

All of this factual knowledge, however, had, and still has, a purpose. It was intended to purge students of the hyperbolic, often ridiculously misinformed writing that clothed in dazzling, or even blinding, splendor, the writings of the Ruskinian school. Mr. Berenson's own essays, however, may ironically have substituted one rhetoric for another. He suggested that the effect of pictures comprised physical sensations as well as abstract, literary ideas. It is impossible to imagine what a shocking innovation this appeared, or how disgustingly sensual the essays were considered. And yet in thirty years the same people who once spoke fervently of Nature and Art now speak pontifically of Tactile Values and Space Composition. But the new attitude toward art that followed upon Mr. Berenson's essays can be seen, devoid of catch phrases, in painting itself. It has been pointed out how Nature imitates Art; someone should point out how Art imitates Art Criticism. For priority must be granted the critics in two cases at least: Ruskin was followed by the Pre-Raphaelites, Berenson by the Cubists. In both cases the artists have taken an abstract theory, on the one hand, that of an unselective imitation of Nature, on the other, that of the life enhancing effect of tactile form, and reduced it to absurdity; but that the theory appeared first in print and then in pigment is indisputable.[1]

Now the introductory essays have been re-issued as one volume, and to supplement them the original lists of perhaps a thousand paintings have been expanded into the present lists of over fifteen thousand pictures. Instead of listing only the principal works of each painter, everything that "shows the distinctive trace of his creative purpose" has been included. Since the books first appeared there has been a great increase in the number of people interested

[1] Of course an unselective rendering of every detail in nature occurred before Ruskin and the Pre-Raphaelites, just as Cézanne and Tactile Values existed before Berenson, but in both cases the theory which was followed by a school of painting appeared first in the writings of a critic and later in the canvasses of the artists.

and trained in the study of Renaissance Art. Those pictures first listed, and up to then unknown, or known under strange names, are now relatively familiar; and with the enlargement of public collections, the greater accessibility of private collections, the facilities of travel, and, above all, the publication of photographic material, an understanding of Renaissance painting that thirty-five years ago would have seemed erudite, is today taken for granted, and we believe Mr. Berenson will find a surprisingly well-informed public for his book.

But admitting that these lists are not designed solely for the specialist, that they are not intended as a gazetteer of painting, why, one may ask, has such a host of minor personalities been included? It is true these artists once hiding under the mantles of the great heroes, of Giotto, of Titian, of Raphael, caused their patriarchal robes to bulge and protrude in a very unpatriarchal manner. But the first lists shook out these parasites, and since then they have been preserved under their own identity in various art periodicals. We presume that Mr. Berenson would justify their present appearance by saying that the rank and file join the leaders together, throwing into relief their greater stature, and that, as in a "Paradiso" by Orcagna or Fra Angelico, all the saints, big and small, find a place, so in the "Paradise of Renaissance Painting," as it would have been called in the 17th century, the connoisseur should be able to see the entire hierarchy from the lowest to the highest. But the completeness of the lists will serve another purpose. Whether or not it was Mr. Berenson's intention, he has nevertheless made the first important catalogue of Renaissance Paintings, a catalogue that will remain a permanent source of reference, like the catalogue of Bartsch for engravings.

In the present volume, as well as giving all the paintings by known masters, a number of new anonymes have been put together. One mythical personage, however, has disappeared. Amico di Sandro, a fictitious but convenient name for the supposed artist of certain pictures between the styles of Sandro Botticelli and Filippino Lippo, has been abandoned, and the pictures have been given back to Botticelli, the youthful Filippino and even Ghirlandajo.[2] Some critics, nevertheless, will continue to insist that Sandro was an actuality and not a myth, for, being a human artifact, he possessed a style much more definite than any actual artist. They will say that Mr. Berenson was right the first time and

[2] The so-called Botticelli, "La Bella Simonetta," in the Pitti.

wrong the second, and one can imagine a story in the manner of Anatole France, in which a critic's reputation is undermined in trying to destroy a fiction that he himself has created.

To the other new anonymes, however, Mr. Berenson has wisely refrained from giving such apt names. They are known as the Master of such and such, and thus will be easier to dispose of if more probable attributions for their pictures occur. The most interesting of these is the Carrand Master. His artistic personality has been built up around the Carrand Tryptich in the Bargello, and to him is given the "St. George and the Dragon" in Count Lanckoroński's collection in Vienna. There is about the Lanckoronski picture a fairy tale poetry — the dragon is no more terrifying than a dragonfly — entirely absent from the solid, serious Uccello of the same subject in the André collection. It is, perhaps, disappointing that the Master of the Rucellai "Madonna" remains an enigma, except that he is an artist "distinct from Cimabue on the one hand and Duccio on the other"; but like all impediments in the stream of attributions he has collected around himself some few pictures. An anonymous painter, however, given a possible identity is the Master of the Pitti "Three Ages." Mr. Berenson suggests that "he might be the octogenarian Giambellino," and this seems probable, considering how close Giambellino's final style is to that of Giorgione. To the usual exiguous Giorgione list there is one important addition, the "Bust of an Old Woman Holding a Scroll," with the words "Col Tempo," in the Academy at Venice. If by him, it must have been done at the same time as the "Gypsy and Soldier." Other paintings very much influenced by Giorgione, such as the Paris "Holy Family with Sebastian and Donor," the Vienna "Lute Player," and the Borghese "Bust of a Man" are now given to Domenico Mancini, who signed an altarpiece at Lendinara and dated it 1511.

But these changes are of more interest to the specialist. The change that will be most striking to those connoisseurs who like paintings as a means of expression and not as a battlefield of attributions, is that the exclusiveness of the first list has been abandoned. Many pictures that would once have been cast into Limbo are now considered at least under the name of the Master, with a warning "S" meaning "Studio," or an "R" meaning "Ruined," or a "G. P." meaning "Great Part." Mr. Berenson has explained the reason in the preface. "The lists in previous editions, although revised from time to time, were all based on the conviction that the

hand of the artist never faltered, even if his head did occasionally nod. The execution on this theory, tended to weigh more than the creative mental effort." But now Mr. Berenson believes that, "Mature interest leads as much to the mind of the artist as to his hand." The artistic personality, from the meagre wraith of the first experts, has thus expanded into something resembling its original shape. When connoisseurship, in the modern sense, began, the Romantic conception of the power of "original Genius" was at its height, and as Morelli's system commenced to cut away from the Italian masters a large amount of their 18th-century excrescences, as well as a large amount of themselves, standards of achievement rose higher and higher. Not to understand a painting but to say that it was done in the studio became, and unfortunately remains, a test of connoisseurship. The 19th-century theory of art for art's sake further falsified the judgment of Renaissance Paintings. Working less to execute commissions than to please himself, the modern artist's hand and his intention, feeble as both may be, are generally one; and there is no need, except for an occasional popular and commissioned painter, like Rossetti, to use apprentices. Consequently it has come about that any picture not painted entirely by the artist who designed it, is despised; whereas it should be a test of greatness that a design can be watered down and diluted by the apprentice and copyist and yet retain an essence of beauty. We believe Mr. Berenson marks the beginning of a change from the dandyish aestheticism of the immediate past, which has grown out of a misunderstanding of his original lists, to a more humanistic conception of art, not as a matter merely of execution and of handling, but as a means of conveying the highest human ideals.

JOHN WALKER III

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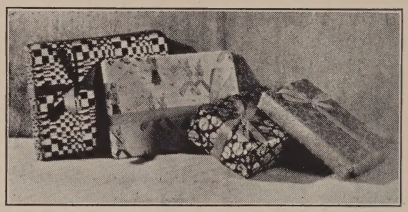

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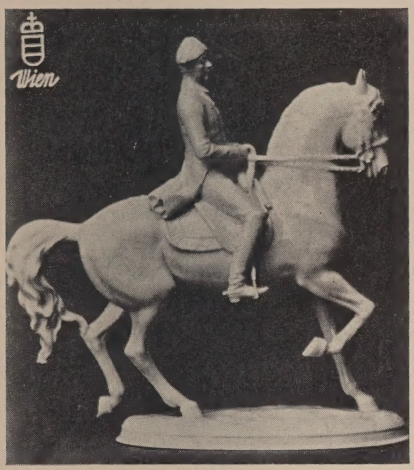

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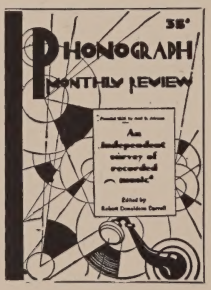

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